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Clarkson, Laurence.
The lost sheep found

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The Loſt ſheep FOUND:

OR,

The Prodigal returned to his Fathers houſe, after many a ſad and weary Journey through many Religious Countreys,

Where now, notwithſtanding all his former Tranſgreſſions, and breach of his Fathers Commands, he is received in an eternal Favor, and all the righteous and wicked Sons that he hath left behinde, reſerved for eternal miſery;

As all along every Church or Diſpenſation may read in his Travels, their Portion after this Life.

Written by Laur. Claxton. *the onely true converted Meſſenger of Chriſt Jeſus, Creator of Heaven and Earth.*

LONDON:

Printed for the Author. 1660.

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THE LOST SHEEP FOUND

by

LAURENCE CLARKSON

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Published by *The Rota* at the University of Exeter
1974

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Scolar Press Limited, Ilkley, Yorkshire

In *The lost sheep found*, Laurence Clarkson (or Claxton) records his pilgrimage through the 'Seven Churches' of mid-seventeenth century England to his rest as the only true bishop under the new third Commission to John Reeve, successor to Moses and Paul.

Born in 1615 in Preston, Lancashire, Clarkson was educated in the Church of England but became such a puritan that he secretly sought godly ministers and scrupled at asking his father's blessing (pp. 4–5). Having learned to pray *ex tempore*, he became a Presbyterian and moved to London. There he soon turned Independent and then Antinomian. In pursuit of that dispensation, he joined Col. Fleetwood's regiment in the New Model Army. Soon he was established as a preacher at Pulham Market ('Pulom') in Norfolk where he preached free grace. After about six months he turned Baptist and on November 6, 1644, was dipped 'in the water that runneth about the *Tower*' (p. 12). Returning to East Anglia he married, by mutual consent before the congregation, Robert Marchant's daughter Frances for whom he provided even during his later ramblings. He exercised his new ministry until January 24, 1644/5 when he was apprehended, as was Hanserd Knollys, on a parliamentary warrant, closely interrogated and confined at Bury St. Edmunds. By July, Clarkson had come under the influence of William Erbery: 'So finding I was but still in *Egypt* burning Brick, I was minded to travel into the Wilderness; so seeing the vanity of the Baptists, I renounced them and had my freedom' (p. 19). Thus Clarkson turned Seeker and wrote his first work *The pilgrimage of saints, by church cast out, in Christ found, seeking truth* (London, 1646). He came to Thomas Edwards's notice, who confirms Clarkson's claim (p. 23) that he preached at Bow Church, see *Gangraena* (1st ed. London, 1646), part ii, pp. 7–8. For a year, Clarkson held a ministry at Sandridge in Hertfordshire. Having been turned out he became an itinerant preacher and wrote for a fee of twelve pounds, *A generall charge or, impeachment of high-treason in the name of Justice Equity, against the communality of England* (London, 1647). This pamphlet has a levelling tone: the communality is acused of a number of serious offences by the messenger of Justice-Equity, Experienced Reason, who replies to the communality's objections to the charges. Experienced Reason castigates the communality for choosing oppressors to represent them 'for who are the oppressors, but the Nobility and Gentry; and who are the oppressed, is not the Yeoman, the Farmer, the Tradesman, and the Labourer?' (p. 11). Experienced Reason insists that this is a consequence of allowing the franchise to be confined to freeholders and freemen of corpora-

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tions. Experienced Reason does not hesitate to condemn unequal taxation, social privilege, lawyers, clerics, the excise, justices of the peace, press censorship, tithes and the directory of worship.

Having wearied of the small parish in Lincolnshire to which he was next presented, Clarkson rejoined the army as teacher to Captain Cambridge's company. Being given two month's leave, he visited his wife before rejoining his regiment in London. There, through Giles Calvert, the radical publisher, he contacted 'a people called *My one flesh*' (p. 24). Clarkson thus turned Ranter and wrote *A single eye, all light, no darkness* (London, 1650). (Excerpts from this tract may be found in N. Cohn, *The pursuit of the millenium* [London, 1957], pp. 347–53.) At this time, Clarkson was an extreme antinomian who held 'that no man could be free'd from sin, till he had acted that so called sin, as no sin' (p. 25). As 'Captain of the Rant', Clarkson indulged in a licentious, roving life and even counted Major William Rainborough among his acquaintances. Arrested under a parliamentary warrant, and examined by a committee of the Rump, Clarkson was imprisoned for blasphemy and his book burnt, but the further sentence of banishment was not executed; Rainborough was disabled from being a justice of the peace (*C.J.*, 27 Sept. 1650, VI, 474–75). When released Clarkson added the practice of astrology, healing and magic to his ranting. At last, called in 1658 to Faith as opposed to the various dispensations of Reason, this world and the devil, he published several works in justification of his new position, culminating with *The lost sheep found* which ends with an attack on the Quakers and the assertion of the true third Commission of John Reeve. Ludowick Muggleton, with whom Clarkson was at odds, is never mentioned. However in 1661, Clarkson submitted to Muggleton and was received into favour. Clarkson died in 1667, a prisoner for debt in Ludgate; he had lent a hundred pounds to help rebuild after London's great fire but the borrowers absconded.

Details of Clarkson's life are noted in *D.N.B.*; his life and doctrines are more extensively discussed by A. L. Morton in *The world of the ranters* (London, 1970), pp. 115–42, which quotes several pages of *The lost sheep found* as well as a number of other documents; Clarkson is briefly mentioned in P. Zagorin, *A history of political thought in the English revolution* (London, 1954), pp. 31–32 which advocates reprinting the present work; and his life and views are used by C. Hill, in *The world turned upside down* (London, 1972), see esp. pp. 171–74, 254–56.

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HAving publiſhed ſeveral Writings in confirmation of this ſpiritual laſt Commiſſion that ever ſhall appear in this unbelieving World, a Well-wiſher to this Commiſſion, yea a man of no mean parts nor Parentage in this Reaſons kingdom, much importuned me to publiſh to this periſhing world, the various leadings forth of my ſpirit through each Diſpenſation, from the year 1630, to this year 1660. and that for no other end, than that Reaſon, or the Devils mouth might be ſtopped, with the hypocriſie of his heart laid naked, and the tongues of Faith with praiſes opened, to conſider what variety of By-paths, and multiplicity of ſeeming realities, yet abſolute notions, the ſouls of the Elect may wander or travel through, ſeeking reſt, and yet find none till the day unexpected, that Soul as a brand be plucked out of the fire of his own righteouſneſs, or profeſſed wickedneſs, unto the true belief of a real Commiſsion which quencheth all the fiery darts of ſin, that Diſpenſations have left cankering in his ſoul, [minde this] as have but patience, and thou ſhalt hear the more I labored for perfect cure and peace in my ſoul,

the further I was from it, insomuch that I was resolved to seek forth no more, supposing my self in as perfect health and liberty in my spirit, as any then professing an unknown God whatsoever.

As do but seriously minde this ensuing Epistle, and thou mayest in me read thy own hypocrisie and dissimulation in point of Worship all along; as in that year 1630. being of the Age of fifteen yeares, and living with my Parents in the town of *Preston* in *Amounderness*, where I was born, and educated in the Form and Worship of the Church of *England*, then established in the Title of the *Episcopal*, or Bishops Government; then, and in that year, my heart began to enquire after the purest Ministery held forth under that Form, not being altogether void of some small discerning, who preached Christ more truly and powerfully, as I thought, than another, and unto them was I onely resolved to follow their Doctrine above any other, and to that end my brethren being more gifted in the knowledge of the Scriptures than my self, and very zealous in what they knew, that they did often prevail with Mr. *Hudson* our Town-Lecturer, to admit of such Ministers as we judged were true laborious Ministers of Christ, who when they came, would thunder against Superstition, and sharply reprove Sin, and prophaning the Lords-day; which to hear, tears would run down my cheeks for joy: so having a pitiful superstitious fellow the Minister of our Town, I spared no pains to travel to *Standish* and other places, where we could hear of a Godly Minister, as several times I have gone ten miles, more or less, fasting all the day, when my Parents never knew of it, and though I have been weary and hungry, yet I came home rejoycing. Then the Ministers had an Order, that none should receive the Sacrament, but such as would take it at the rayled Altar kneeling, which I could not do, and therefore went to such Ministers in the Countrey that gave it sitting: Now a while after Mr. *Starky* the Minister of our Town, taking notice of leaving our Parish, informed our father the danger of his children going into Heresie, and the trouble that would

would enſue upon our father and his children, beſides the diſgrace of all good Church-men, which did much incenſe our father, but all to no purpoſe, for I thought it conſcience to obey God before man; however I being under my fathers tuition, he caſt a ſtrict eye over me, and would force me to read over the prayers in the book of *Common-prayer* and *Practice of Piety*, which I have done, till they have fallen aſleep and my ſelf, this was our devotion in thoſe days; but increaſing in knowledge, I judged to pray another mans form, was vaine babling, and not acceptable to God: and then the next thing I ſcrupled, was asking my parents bleſſing, that often times in the winter mornings, after I have been out of my bed, I have ſtood freezing above, and durſt not come down till my father was gone abroad, and the reaſon I was ſatisfied, the bleſſing or prayers of a wicked man God would not hear, and ſo ſhould offend God to ask him bleſſing; for either of theſe two ways I muſt, down on my knees, and ſay, Father pray to God to bleſs me, or give me your bleſſing for Gods ſake, either of which I durſt not uſe with my lips, but was in me refrained; and I improved my knowledge in the Doctrine of thoſe men I judged was the true Miniſters of God, ſo that with teares many times I have privatly ſought the Lord as I thought, whether thoſe things that the puritanical Prieſts preached, was my own, and the more I was troubled, that I could not pray without a Book as my brethren did, fain would I have been judged a Profeſſor with them, but wanted parts, yet often times have had motions to tender my ſelf to prayer amongſt them, but durſt not, and to that end I might be admitted to pray with them, I have prayed alone to try how I could pray, but could not utter my ſelf as I knew they did: ſo I remember their was a day of Humiliation to be ſet apart by the Puritans ſo called, to ſeek God by prayer and expounding of Scriptures, againſt which day I took my pen, and writ a pretty form of words, ſo got them by heart, and when the day came I was called to improve my gifts, at which I was glad, yet in a trembling condition leſt I ſhould be foyled; however, to Praver I went,

went, with a devotion as though I had known the true God, but alas, when I was in the midst of that Prayer, I left my form of words, and so was all in a sweat as though I had been sick, and to came off like a hypocrite as I was, which so seized on my soul, that I thought for my hypocrisie damnation would be my portion; however it humbled me, that I was glad to become one of the meanest of the number, still full of fears that when I died, I should go to hell; in which time I writ all the hypocrisie of my heart in a Letter to send to Mr *Hudson* our Lecturer, to know his judgement whether such a soul as there related might be saved? in the interim comes a motion within me, saying, *A fool, why dost thou send to man that knows not what will become of his own soul? burn it, and wait upon me*; which Letter I did burn, and not many weeks after I had a gift of Prayer that was not inferior to my brethren, for which I was glad for the goodness of God to my soul; and as I increased in knowledge, so was my zeal, that I have many times privately prayed with rough hard Sinders under my bare knees, that so God might hear me; and when I could not end my Prayers with tears running down my cheeks, I was afraid some sin shut the attention of God from me: and thus did I do for a few years, in which time the Bishops began to totter and shake, yea, for their cruelty and superstition, was totally routed.

Now if then you had asked me what I thought God was, the Devil was, what the Angels nature was, what Heaven and Hell was, and what would become of my soul after death?

My answer had plainly been this: That my God was a grave, ancient, holy, old man, as I supposed sat in Heaven in a chair of gold, but as for his nature I knew no more than a childe: and as for the Devil, I really believed was some deformed person out of man, and that he could where, when, and how, in what shape appear he pleased; and therefore the devil was a great Scar-croe, in so much that every black thing I saw in the night, I thought was the devil: But as for the Angels, I knew nothing at all; and for Heaven I thought was a glorious place, with

with variety of rooms suitable for Himself, and his Son Christ, and the Holy Ghost: and Hell, where it was I knew not, but judged it a local place, all dark, fire and brimstone, which the devils did torment the wicked in, and that for ever; but for the soul at the hour of death, I believed was either by an Angel or a Devil fetcht immediately to Heaven or Hell. This was the height of my knowledge under the Bishops Government, and I am perswaded was the height of all Episcopal Ministers then living; so that surely if they shall be established for a National Ministery, they will not impose such Ceremonies as then they did, but are grown wiser about God and Devil; for they will finde the major part of *England* is grown wiser, so cannot stoop to an inferiour Light; therefore if ye now begin to stand, take heed lest ye fall.

Secondly, After this I travelled into the Church of the Presbyterians, where still I made Brick of straw and clay, nay there I found my soul the more oppressed, and further ensnared in the land of *Egypt*, burning Brick all the day; but I knowing no further light, I was willing to bear their yoke, and sometimes found it pleasant; for herein consisted the difference of the Presbyterian and Episcopal, onely in a few superstitious Rites and Ceremonies, as also their Doctrine was more lively than the Episcopal, for they would thunder the Pulpit with an unknown God, which then I thought was true, and sharply reprove sin, though since I saw we were the greatest sinners; but however their Doctrine I liked, it being the highest I then heard of: So war being begun betwixt the Episcopal and the Presbyterian, I came for *London*, where I found them more precise than in our Popish Countrey of *Lancashire*; for with us the Lords-day was highly profaned by the toleration of May-poles, Dancing and Rioting, which the Presbyterians hated, and in their Doctrine cryed out against, which thing my soul also hated, though yet I was not clear but the Steeple was the house of God, from that saying of *David*, Psalm 84.10. saying, *For a day in thy Courts is better than a thousand: I had rather be a Door-keeper in the house of my God, than*

than to dwell in the tents of wickedness; so that I finding out the ablest Teachers in *London*, as then I judged was Mr. *Calamy*, *Case*, *Brooks*, and such like, unto whom I daily resorted, if possible, to get assurance of Salvation, not neglecting to receive the Ordinance of Breaking of Bread from them, judging in so doing, *I shewed forth the Lords death till he came.* Now the persecution of the Bishops fell so heavy upon the Presbyterian Ministers, that some fled for *New-England*; and *Hooker* had left several Books in print, which so tormented my soul, that I thought it unpossible to be saved; however, I laboured what in me lay, to finde those signs and marks in my own soul, and to that end neglected all things that might hinder it; and thus for a certain time I remained a hearer of them, till such time that Wars began to be hot, and they pressed the people to send out their husbands and servants to help the Lord against the Mighty, by which many a poor soul knowing no better, was murthered, and murthered others, taking the Bible in their Pockets, and the Covenant in their Hats, by me was esteemed the work and command of the Lord, not at all minding the command of the second Commission to the contrary, as in 2 *Cor.* 10.4. saying, *We do not war after the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds*, &c. This was not by me understood, but as they did in the old time in *Moses* his Commission, so I thought we might do then; in which time the Presbyterians began to be a great people, and in high esteem, and at that time there was a great slaughter of the Protestants in *Ireland*, that *London* was thronged with their Ministers and people, and several Collections was gathered for them: but this I observed, that as the Presbyterians got power, so their pride and cruelty increased against such as was contrary to them, so that

Thirdly I left them, and travelled to the Church of the Independents; for this I observed as wars increased, so variety of Judgements increased: and coming to them, of which was Mr. *Goodwin*, and some others, I discerned their Doctrine clearer,

clearer, and of a more moderate spirit: Now the greatest difference betwixt them, was about baptizing of infants, pleading by Scripture, that none but the infants or children of Believers ought to be baptized; and that none of them must receive the Sacrament, as then it was called, but such as was Church-members, judging all that was not congregated into fellowship, were not of God, but the world: So that about these things I was searching the truth thereof, and labored in the letter of the Scripture to satisfie my judgement; in the interim hearing of one Doctor *Crisp*, to him I went, and he held forth against all the aforesaid Churches, That let his people be in society or no, though walked all alone, yet if he believed that Christ Jesus died for him, God beheld no iniquity in him: and to that end I seriously perused his Bookes, and found it proved by Scripture, as it is written *Numbers* 23. 21. *He hath not beheld iniquity in* Jacob, *neither hath he seen perverseness in* Israel. This was confirmed by other Scriptures, that I conceived whose sins Christ died for, their sin was to be required no more; for thus thinking when the debt was paid, the Creditor would not look upon him as indebted to him, yet this I ever thought Christ never died for all, though the Scripture was fluent to that purpose, yet I found Scriptures to the contrary, and was ever as touching that satisfied, that as Christ prayed for none but such as was given him out of the world, *I pray for them, I pray not for the world*, so that I thought he did not die for them he would not pray for, which thought now I know is true, and have by pen, and can by tongue make good the same: But I must return to the time then under Doctor *Crisp*'s Doctrine, in which I did endeavor to become one of those that God saw no sin, and in some measure I began to be comforted therewith, but how, or which way to continue in the same I could not tell; having as yet but little understanding in the Scripture I was silent, onely still enquiring after the highest pitch of Light then held forth in *London*, in which time Mr. *Randel* appeared, with Mr. *Simpson*, with such a Doctrine as Doctor *Crisp*, onely higher and clearer, which then was

called *Antinomians*, or against the Law, so that I left all Church-fellowship, and burning of Brick in *Egypt*, and travelled with them up and down the borders, part *Egypt*, and part Wilderness.

Fourthly, take notice in this Sect I continued a certain time, for Church it was none, in that it was but part form, and part none; in which progress I had a great sort of professors acquainted with me, so begun to be some body amongst them, and having a notable gift in Prayer, we often assembled in private, improving my gifts, judging then the best things of this world was onely prepared for the Saints, of which then I judged my self one, not knowing any other but that God was a Spirit, and did motion in and out into his Saints, and that this was Gods Kingdom, and we his people; and therefore I judged God did fight for us against our enemies, that so we might enjoy him in liberty: At which time *Paul Hobson* brake forth with such expressions of the in-comes and out-goes of God, that my soul much desired such a gift of preaching, which after a while *Hobson* and I being acquainted, he had a Captains place under Colonel *Fleetwood* for *Yarmouth*, so that thither with him I went, and there tarried a soldier with them, at which time I had a small gift of Preaching, and so by degrees increased into a method, that I attempted the Pulpit at Mr. *Wardels* Parish in *Suffolk*, and so acquainted my gifts more and more in publick, that having got acquaintance at *Norwich*, I left the Company at *Yarmouth*; so after a few dayes I was admitted into a Pulpit two or three times: so coming a man from *Pulom* side in *Norfolk* and hearing of me, was greatly affected with my Doctrine, but especially my Prayer, and was very urgent with me to go to their Parish of *Russel*, which within two weeks after I assented to be there such a day, which was against the Fast-day; for at that time the Parliament had established a Monethly Fast, which was the last wednesday of the moneth: at the set time I came to the place appointed, where this man had given notice to the best affected people in those parts, what a rare man was to preach that day, which thing I

was

was ambitious or, as also to get some silver: Well, to the matter I went, and as was my Doctrine, so was their understanding, though I say't, as young as I was, yet was not I inferior to any Priest in those days: So in conclusion of my days work there came several in the Church-yard to me, and gave me thanks for my paines, yea, hoped the Lord would settle me among them, which news I was glad to hear; so for the next Lords-Day by Goodman *Mays* and *Burton* was I invited to preach at *Pulem*, which was a great Parish; so upon liking I went, and was well approved of by all the Godly, so there for a time I was settled for twenty shillings a week, and very gallantly was provided for, so that I thought I was in Heaven upon earth judging the Priests had a brave time in this world, to have a house built for them, and means provided for them, to tell the people stories of other mens works. Now after I had continued half a year, more or less, the Ministers began to envy me for my Doctrine, it being free Grace, so contrary to theirs, and that the more, their people came from their own Parish to hear me, so that they called me *Sheep-stealer* for robbing them of their flock, and to that end came to catch and trap me at several Lectures where I was called, that at last they prevailed with the Heads of the Parish to turn me out, so I slighting them as they could me, we parted, and then having many friends, I was importuned to come and live with them, so above all I chose *Robert Marchants* house my Lodging place, because his Daughter I loved; and for a certain time preached up and down in several Churches, both of *Suffolk* and *Norfolk*, and many times in private, that I had a great company. Now in the interim there was one *John Tyler* a *Colchester* man frequented those parts where then I inhabited, who was a Teacher of the Baptists, and had a few scattered up and down the Countrey, which several times we had meetings and converse about a lawful Minister: now I knowing no other but that those sayings, *Go ye teach all Nations, baptizing them, and lo I am with you to the end of the world*; that continuance to the end of the world, was the Load-stone that

brought me to believe that the Baptism of the Apostles was as much in force now, as in their days, and that Command did as really belong to me as to them; so being convinced, for *London* I went to be further satisfied, so that after a little discourse with *Patience*, I was by him baptized in the water that runneth about the *Tower*, after which I stayed at *London* about a week.

Fifthly, then for *Suffolk* again I travelled through the Church of the Baptists, and was of *Robert Marchants* family received with joy, for I had the love of all the family; and though he had four Daughters marriageable, yet there was one I loved above any in that Countrey, though I was beloved of other friends daughters far beyond her in estate, yet for her knowledge and moderation in spirit, I loved her; so there up and down a certain time I continued preaching the Gospel, and very zealous I was for obedience to the Commands of Christ Jesus; which Doctrine of mine converted many of my former friends and others, to be baptized, and so into a Church-fellowship was gathered to officiate the order of the Apostles, so that really I thought if ever I was in a true happy condition, then I was, knowing no other but as aforesaid, that this Command of Christ did as really belong to me as to them; and we having the very same rule, as Elders and Deacons, with Dipping, and Breaking of bread in the same manner as they, I was satisfied we onely were the Church of Christ in this world.

Thus having a great company, and baptizing of many into that Faith, there was no small stir among the priests what to do with me, which afterwards they got a Warrant from the Parliament, to apprehend Mr. *Knowles* and my self, for then *Knowles* was about *Ipswich* preaching that doctrine, and baptizing certain people into that Faith; now they apprehended Mr. *Knowls* in *Ipswich* Goal, and from thence with their Warrant came to secure me, so in the week day being privately assembled in a friends house, within three miles of *Ay*, there came in an Officer from the Parliament with certain Soldiers, and

and two Conſtables, with ſome of the pariſh, having clubs and ſtaves ſurrounded the houſe, I being earneſt in my doctrine, and at that time was very much preſſing the people, that without ſubmitting to Baptiſm all their profeſſion was nothing, proving by Scripture that as Chriſt was our patern, ſo we muſt follow him as enſample, which could not be unleſs we kept his commandments, as it is written, *If ye love me, keep my commandments*: Now dipping being a command of Chriſt, I judged them rebells that did profeſs the name of Chriſt, and not ſubmit their bodies to the Ordinance of Chriſt, and that Chriſt requires obedience from none but ſuch as was capaple of being taught, and therefore no children, but men and women, ought to receive the Ordinance of Baptiſm, in which time ſome of the Officers hearing me, interrupted me in my doctrine, and told me I muſt leave off, and go along with them, ſhewing me the Authority they had from the Parliament; however, ſome of our friends would have oppoſed them, but I ſaw it was in vain, and ſo deſired our friends to be quiet, and ſaid, we muſt not onely profeſs Chriſt, but alſo ſuffer for him; ſo it being in the winter time, and almoſt night, they halted me for *Ay*, though I, with our friends, deſired but ſo much liberty as to go to my wifes fathers houſe for linnen and other neceſſaries, and they would engage for my appearance before the Committee at *Bury*; but all in vain, then my wife told them they ſhould provide a horſe for her, for whither ever I went, ſhe would go: at which they were very much incenſed, but all to no purpoſe, ſo at laſt a Trooper would have her to ride behind him, but ſhe with ſcorn refuſed, then they got her furniture to ride behind me, ſo taking leave with our friends, to *Ay* that night we were carried; now one of them went before to provide Lodging, ſo the Town having intelligence they had taken a great Anabaptiſt, there was no ſmall waiting for my coming, that when I came into the entering of the town, the inhabitants had beſet both ſides of the ſtreets to ſee my perſon, ſuppoſing an Anabaptiſt had bin a ſtrange creature, but when they beheld me, with my wife, they ſaid one to another, He is like one of us, yea, they are a very pretty couple, it is pity I ſhould ſuffer:

ſuffer : ſo to the Inne I came, where a great company was in the yard to behold me; ſo being unmorſed, they guarded me to our Lodging, and great proviſion was made for ſupper, where many a pot was ſpent that night to ſee my face; ſo to bed we went, and in the next room by Soldiers guarded, ſo in the morning we were haſted for *St. Edmonds Bury*, which that morning Captain *Harvey* gave out many ſad and grievous words what the Committee would do with me, but the devil was deceived; however I ſaid little: ſo they came to me with a Bill what I had to pay for Beer, Wine, and Meat; unto which I ſaid, I had none, but if I had, I would pay none, it was ſufficient I was wrongfully deprived of my freedom, and not to pay for their rioting; however they told me, I muſt before I go; then keep me here ſtill: ſurely, ſaid I, your Maſters that ſet you on work, are able to pay you your Wages: Well, they ſaid before I came out of priſon, if I were not hanged, I ſhould pay it; then ſaid I, reſt your ſelves contented till that day: ſo towards *Bury* we took our Journey, and one was gone before to inform the Committee I was taken; againſt my appearance they were aſſembled in a full Committee, of which as I take it, Captain *Bloyes* of *Woodbridge* was then Chair-man. So to the Hall I was guarded, the room being full, I was conveyed up to the Chair-man, who asked my name? To which I replied, this was ſtrange that you had a Warrant to take me, and know not my name: Well, that was no matter, do you tell us your name; ſo I told them: What countrey-man are you? I ſaid *Lancaſhire*. What made you travel ſo far off into theſe parts? The like motions that moved others, moved me. How long have you profeſſed this way of dipping? Not ſo long as I ought to have done, had my underſtanding been enlightened. What then, you approve of what you do? Otherways I ſhould not do it. How many have you dipped in theſe parts? I being a free born ſubject of this Nation ought not to accuſe my ſelf; but you are to prove your charge, by ſufficient witneſs againſt me; but however I being brought before you for my obedience to the Commands

of

of Christ, I am neither afraid nor ashamed to tell you what I have done: but to give you an account how many I have dipped, that I cannot tell. Then you have dipped some? Yea, that I have. After what manner do you dip them? After a decent order. We are informed you dip both men and women naked? As unto that you are not rightly informed. Where is your *Jordan* you dip them in? Though it is not *Jordan*, yet there are several places convenient. Do you not dip them in the night? Yea. And why do you not dip them in the day, it being an Ordinance of Christ as you say? Because such as you are not able to bear the truth. Then said Sir *William Spring* but Mr. *Claxton*, have not you forced some in the water against their will? That is contrary to Scripture. Did you not one time, being on horse-back, with a switch force some into the water? Let them that so informed you, affirm it before you to my face. But Mr. *Claxton* who were those that you dipped about *Framingham*? At this time I cannot remember, but several I have dipped there aways. Did not you dip six Sisters there about at one time? I never dipped six at one time. Then said Sir *John Rowse*, we are informed you dipped six Sisters one night naked. That is nothing to me what you are informed, for I never did such a thing; Nay further, it is reported, that which of them you liked best, you lay with her in the water? Surely your experience teacheth you the contrary, that nature hath small desire to copulation in water, at which they laughed; But, said I, you have more cause to weep for the unclean thoughts of your heart. Mr. *Claxton* have not you a wife? One that brought me, said she is in town. Where is she? Fetch her hither: she being without the door, came in quickly, and took me by the hand. Well, said the Chair-man, you are a loving woman, is this your husband? Yes, he is my husband. How long have you been married? About two moneths. Where were you married? At *Waybread* in my fathers house. Who married you? My husband, with the consent of my parents, and the Church. At that there was a great laughter, and said, your husband marry you to himself, that is against the law;

law; I being vexed at their folly, answered, Marriage is no other, but a free consent in love each to the other before God, and who was sufficient to publish the Contract as my self? Nay but Mr. *Claxton*, you are not rightly informed as touching a true Marriage. I say I was married according to truth: then if your Marriage be lawful, we are not lawfully married. I question not yours, look ye to that; but this I know, and can prove, I am married according to the word of God; neither can your law repeal the contract of that couple, that hath their parents consent, and the Church confirming the same. Well, well, we shall give you the hearing, but how many was present when you took her to your wife? About twelve. What did you say to her and the Church? First, I sought the Lord by prayer for a blessing upon that Ordinance, and then I declared unto her parents and the Church what had passed betwixt she and I, and that before them all I took her by the hand, and asked her if she was not willing to take me for her husband during life? To which she assented, as also her parents approved of it, and gave her to me with the confirmation of the Church. Then said the Chair-man, What think you Gentlemen, of this Marriage? They said it was a strange Marriage. What then Mrs. *Claxton*, you look upon this man your lawful husband? Yea, I deny all other men in the world. Then you have lain with him? I ought to ly with no other. But Mrs. *Claxton*, did your husband dip you before, or after he became your husband? Before I was contracted in publick? How or after what manner did your husband dip you? in your clothes or naked? Sir, we defie any undecent cariage, if you were dipped in your clothes you would spoil them, and besides it might endanger your life with cold: we have clothes for both men and women provided for that purpose. What were you plunged over head and ears? So saith the Scripture. What Mr. *Claxton*, did you go with her into the water? No I stood on the bank side. Mrs. *Claxton*, were not you amazed, or almost drowned? No Sir, the obedience to the Command of God did shut out all fear and cold. What did not you go to bed after

after dipped? I had a warm bed with dry linnen provided? Did not your husband lodge with you that night? There is no such wickedness among us. Why what matter, you were married before God. Till we were publickly before witness, we had no such custom, and let me tell you, if it be the practise of your Church, it is not so in ours. Nay woman, be not angry, I do not say you did so, for truly I am as much against sin as you are. But Mrs. *Claxton*, we have an Order to secure your husband, and there to endure the pleasure of the Parliament, what will you do? we have no Order to stay you. If you stay my husband, you must stay me also. Why, are you willing to go to Goal with your husband? For the cause of Christ I am willing to suffer imprisonment. Then you are resolved yours is the way of Truth. Then said I, for the present I know no Truth but this. Well Mr. *Claxton*, after a while you will be otherwise informed. Never to turn back again. We are to commit you to custody, that so you may seduce no more people. Sir, I must obey your pleasure, but I shall not deny to be obedient to the Command of Christ. Well, we shall talk with you another time: so they ordered to make my *Mittimus*, and in my presence gave it Captain *Poe* my Keeper, and said, Mr. *Claxton*, you may take notice that the Parliament is favorable to you, that they will not send you to the common Goal, but to a house where none but men of Quality are kept in custody. Then said *Poe*, who was my Goaler, what shall his wife do? Then said my wife, Where ever my husband is, there will I be, then the Committee Ordered her with me: so coming thither, there was none but two Papists Knights, and a Sea Captain, so after we had supped, we were directed to our Chamber, which was a large chamber, and pretty good Furnirure. Now under a week I told Captain *Poe* that I was not able to board at half a crown a Meal. Then, saith he, you must go to the common Goal: Thither would I go, for I am not ashamed to sit in the Stocks in the Market-place, for the Name of Christ. So he informed the Committee, but they would not remove me, and said, he must agree for the cham-

ber, and I finde my ſelf Diet: At this *Poe* was vexed, and ſent up his Handmaid Miſtriſs *Tuck*, to agree with me for the chamber at four ſhillings a week, which for the ſpace of half a year I gave her, in which time our people increaſed, there being *William Muly* and ſome others of this way in *Bury*, I had oftentimes money from the Army, and the Churches at *London* and *Colcheſter*, ſo that I wanted for nothing; and ſome came to my chamber, and there I preached unto them, in ſo much that the Keeper informed the Committee, who that Sunday at night aſſembled, to conſider what to do with me: in concluſion they ſhut me cloſe priſoner, and kept my wife from me, which was more grief to me then the reſt. Well, againſt the next Lords-day I appointed our friends to ſtand before my window on the *Angel-hill*, that being the way for all the great Ones of the Town to go to their worſhip, ſo at the very inſtant time putting my head forth of the Window, I did boldly exhort the people to beware of the prieſts, and while it is the time of your health, ſubmit your ſouls and bodies in obedience to the true Baptiſm, and be no longer deluded to think that your infants are commanded to obey, or capable of an Ordinance impoſed upon them. Oh for ſhame, if not for fear, ſtand ſtill and hear the truth related by his true and lawful Miniſter, otherwiſe turn back again; At which a great ſort of people gave attention, which did enrage the Prieſt and Magiſtrate, yet they knew not what to do with me, but charged me to do ſo no more. Then ſaid I, take heed how you keep my wife from me: is this to do as you would be done unto? ſo they forthwith took off the Pad-lock, and let my friends come to me. After this I had the liberty of the whole houſe, nay, to ſit at the ſtreet-door; for he had no priſoners but ſuch as gave in great ſecurity for their ſafe impriſonment; and as for me, and *Weſtrop* my fellow-priſoner, they feared not our going away, onely they were afraid I ſhould dip ſome. So a little after, Spring coming on, I got liberty, not being well, to go abroad with a Keeper, and Captain *Gray*, who was called Captain *Drink-water*, was to go with me: Now above all the reſt,

rest, I desired Captain *Gray* to go with me to a Wood a mile distant from me; it having rained over night, the Brook was up, so a man coming with a Pole, I desired him to lay it over, which he did, so I went over first, and the Captain followed me, and shaking the Pole, he fell in to the middle in water, and in a trembling condition he was, lest the Committee should hear of it; so to the Wood we went, and there he dried his Hose and Stockings, so after we came to prison again, the Committee hearing of it, questioned Captain *Gray*, but he told them the truth, at which they laughed. After I had lain there a long time, Mr. *Sedgewick*, and Mr. *Erbery* came to visit me, with whom I had great discourse, and after they were gone, I had a great conceit in my minde, as touching the succession of Baptism, which I could not see but in the death of the Apostles, there was never since no true Administrator; for I could not read there was ever any that had power by imposition of hands, to give the Holy Ghost, and work miracles as they did; so that in the death of them I concluded Baptism to either young or old, was ceased. Now observe, I could discern this, but could not by the same rule see that preaching and prayer was to cease: for this now I know, as in the death of the Apostles, and them commissionated by them, the Commission ceased, as unto all their Form and Worship: So finding I was but still in *Egypt* burning Brick, I was minded to travel into the Wilderness; so seeing the vanity of the Baptists, I renounced them and had my freedom. Then

Sixthly, I took my journey into the society of those people called *Seekers*, who worshipped God onely by prayer and preaching, therefore to *Ely* I went, to look for *Sedgwick* and *Erbery* but found them not, onely their people were assembled: with whom I had discourse, but found little satisfaction; so after that for *London* I went to finde *Seekers* there, which when I came, there was divers fallen from the Baptists as I had done, so coming to *Horn* in *Fleet lane*, and *Fleten* in *Seacoal-lane*, they informed me that several had left the Church of *Patience*, in seeing the vanity of *Kiffin* and others, how highly they

took it upon them, and yet could not prove their Call successively; so glad was I there was a people to have society withal; then was I moved to put forth a book which was the first that ever I writ, bearing this Title, *The pilgrimage of Saints, by church cast out, in Christ found, seeking truth*, this being a suitable peece of work in those days, that it wounded the Churches; which book *Randel* owned, and sold many for me. Now as I was going over *London-bridge*, I met with *Thomas Gun* a teacher of the Baptists, who was a man of a very humble, moderate spirit, who asked me if I own'd the *Pilgrimage of Saints*? I told him yea: then said he, you have writ against the church of Christ, and have discovered your self an enemy to Christ. Then I said, it is better be a hypocrite to man then to God, for I finde as much dissimulation, covetousness, back-biting and envy, yea as filthy wickedness among some of them, as any people I know: and notwithstanding your heaven-like carriage, if all your faults were written in your forehead, for ought I know, you are a hypocrite as well as I; which afterwards it was found out he had lain with his Landlady many times; and that he might satisfie his Lust, upon slighty erands, he sent her husband into the country, that so he might lodge with his wife all night; which being found out, so smote his conscience, that he privately took a Pistol and shot himself to death in *Georges-fields*. As all along in this my travel I was subject to that sin, and yet as saint-like, as though sin were a burden to me, so that the fall of this *Gun* did so seize on my soul, that I concluded there was none could live without sin in this world; for notwithstanding I had great knowledge in the things of God, yet I found my heart was not right to what I pretended, but full of lust and vain-glory of this world, finding no truth in sincerity that I had gone through, but meerly the vain pride and conceit of Reasons imagination, finding my heart with the rest, seeking nothing but the praise of men in the heighth of my prayer and preaching, yet in my doctrine through all these opinions, pleading the contrary, yea abasing my self, and exalting a Christ that then I knew

knew not. Now after this I return'd to my wife in *Suffolk*, and wholly bent my mind to travel up & down the country, preaching for monies, which then I intended for *London*, ſo coming to *Colcheſter* where I had *John Aplewhit*, *Purkis*, and ſome other friends, I preached in publick; ſo going for *London*, a mile from *Colcheſter*, I ſet my Cane upright upon the ground, and which way it fell, that way would I go; ſo falling towards *Kent*, I was at a ſtand what I ſhould do there, having no acquaintance, and but little money, yet whatever hardſhip I met withal, I was reſolved for *Graveſend*, ſo with much a do I got that night to a town called *Bilrekey*, it being in the height of Summer, and in that town then having no friends, and I think but ſix pence, I lodged in the Church porch all night, ſo when day appeared, I took my journey for *Graveſend*, and in the way I ſpent a groat of my ſix pence, and the other two pence carried me over the water; ſo being in the town, I enquired for ſome ſtrange opinionated people in the town, not in the leaſt owning of them, but ſeemingly to enſnare them, which they directed me to one *Rugg* a Victualler, ſo coming in, though having no monies, yet I called for a pot of Ale, ſo after a few words uttered by me, the man was greatly taken with my ſayings, in ſo much that he brought me ſome bread and cheeſe, with which I was refreſhed, and bid me take no care, for I ſhould want for nothing, you being the man that writ *The Pilgrimage of Saints*, I have had a great deſire to ſee you, with ſome ſoldiers and others, ſo for the preſent he left me, and informed Cornet *Lokier* and the reſt, that I was in town, who forthwith came to me, and kindly received me, and made way for me to preach in the *Blockhouſe*; ſo affecting my doctrine, they quartered me in the Officers lodging, and two days after they carried me to *Dartford*, where there I preached; ſo againſt the next Lords-day came for *Graveſend*, and there preached in the Market-place, which was ſuch a wonder to the town and countrey, that ſome for love, and others for envy, came to hear, that the Prieſt of the town had almoſt none to hear him, that if the Magiſtrate durſt, he would have apprehended me, for I boldly

boldly told them God dwelled not in the Temple made with hands, neither was any place more holy then another, proving by Scripture, that where two or three were gathered in his name, God was in the midst of them, and that every Believer was the Temple of God, as it is written, *God dwelleth with a humble and contrite spirit*; So after this we went to *Maidston* and *Town-maulin*, and there I preached up and down, so at last having given me about five pounds, I went to my wife and promised in two weekes to return again, which I did, but I found not *Lokier* nor the rest so affectionate as before, for he had a gift of preaching, & therein did seek honor, so suspitious of my blasting his reputation, slighted and persecuted me, so that I left them, and towards *Maidston* travelled, so one *Bulfinch* of *Town-maulin* having friends towards *Canterbury*, perswaded me to go with him, and so against the next Lords-day, having no steeple free, we had a Gentlemans barn free, where a great company was assembled: then for *Sandwich* I went, and up and down found friends, so coming to *Canterbury* there was some six of this way, amongst whom was a maid of pretty knowledge, who with my Doctrine was affected, and I affected to lye with her, so that night prevailed, and satisfied my lust, afterwards the mayd was highly in love with me, and as gladly would I have been shut of her, lest some danger had ensued, so not knowing I had a wife she was in hopes to marry me, and so would have me lodge with her again, which fain I would, but durst not, then she was afraid I would deceive her, and would travel with me, but by subtilty of reason I perswaded her to have patience, while I went into *Suffolk*, and setled my occasions, then I would come and marry her, so for the present we parted, and full glad was I that I was from her delivered, so to *Maidston* I came, and having got some six pounds, returned to my wife, which a while after I went for *Kent* again, but found none of the people so zealous as formerly, so that my journey was but a small advantage to me, and then I heard the maid had been in those parts to seek me, but not hearing of me, returned home again, and not long after

after was married to one of that ſect, and ſo there was an end of any further progreſs into *Kent*. Then not long after I went for *London*, and ſome while remained preaching at *Bowe* in Mr. *Sterry*'s place, and *London-ſtone*, but got nothing; ſo to *Suffolk* I went, and having but one childe, put it to nurſe, intending to go to my Parents in *Lancaſhire*: So leaving my Wife at my couſin *Andertons*, I hearing of *Seekers* in *Hartfordſhire*, went thither, and at laſt was hired by Mr. *Hickman* to preach at *Peters* in *St. Albans*, ſo being liked, I was hired for a moneth longer, ſo fetcht my Wife, and there continued till ſuch time the Town of *Sanderidge* took me for their Miniſter, and ſetled me in the Vicaridge, where Sir *John Garret*, Colonel *Cox*, and Juſtice *Robotom* came conſtantly to hear me, and gave me ſeveral Gifts, ſo that in heaven I was again; for I had a high pitch of free Grace, and mightily flown in the ſweet Diſcoveries of God, and yet not at all knowing what God was, onely an infinite Spirit, which when he pleaſed did glance into his people the ſweet breathings of his Spirit; and therefore preached, it was not ſufficient to be a profeſſor, but a poſſeſſor of Chriſt, the poſſeſſion of which would cauſe a profeſſion of him, with many ſuch high flown notions, which at that time I knew no better, nay, and in truth I ſpeak it, there was few of the Clergy able to reach me in Doctrine or Prayer; yet notwithſtanding, not being an Univerſity man, I was very often turned out of employment, that truly I ſpeak it, I think there was not any poor ſoul ſo toſſed in judgement, and for a poor livelihood, as then I was. Now in this my proſperity I continued not a year, but the Parſon being a ſuperſtitious Cavelier, got an Order from the Aſſembly of Divines to call me in queſtion for my Doctrine, and ſo put in a drunken fellow in my room: and thus was I diſplaced from my heaven upon earth, for I was dearly beloved of *Smiths* and *Thrales*, the chief of the Pariſh. Well there was no other way but for *London* again, and after a while ſent my Goods for *Suffolk* by water: now at this I concluded all was a cheat, yea preaching it ſelf, and ſo with this apprehenſion went up

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and down *Hartfordſhire*, *Bedford*, and *Buckinghamſhire*, and by my ſubtilty of reaſon got monies more or leſs; as of one at *Barton*, I had twelve pounds for the printing of a book againſt the Commonalty of *England*, impeaching them for traytors, for ſuffering the Parliament their ſervants, to uſurp over them, judging the Common-wealth was to cut out the form, and ſhape of their grievances, and ſend it up to their ſervants the the Parliament to finiſh, ſhewing, as the Common-wealth gave the Parliament power, ſo they were greater then the Parliament, with matter to the effect. And then being preſented to a ſmall pariſh in *Lincolnſhire*, thither I went, but finding no ſociety to hear, I grew weary thereof, and ſtayd with ſome friends at *Oford*, ſo with a little monies went home again, and not long after going into *Lincolnſhire*, I preached in ſeveral places, that at laſt Captain *Cambridge* hearing of me, and was much affected with me, and made me teacher to their Company, and ſaid I ſhould have all neceſſaries provided me, and a man alowed me; then I was well recruited and horſed, ſo that I judged it was the mercy of God to me, my diſtreſs being great, and my care for my family. Now after a while our Regiment went for *London*, ſo though I had preached in *Lincoln*, *Horncaſtle*, *Spilsby*, and many other places, yet they would excuſe me for two moneths, having no need of preaching at *London*, ſo with what monies I had I went to my wife, and ſtaid there a while, and ſo came for *London*: Now our Reigment being *Twiſltons*, Quartered in *Smith-field*, but I Quarrered in a private-houſe, who was a former friend of mine, asked me if I heard not of a people called *My one fleſh*? I ſaid no, what was their opinion, and how ſhould I ſpeak with any of them? Then ſhe directed me to *Giles Calvert*. So that now friends, I am travelling further into the *Wilderneſs*, having now done burning of Brick, I muſt ſtill wander in the mountains and deſerts; ſo coming to *Calvert*, and making enquiry after ſuch a people, he was afraid I came to betray them, but exchanging a few words in the height of my language, he was much affected, and ſatisfied I was a friend of theirs, ſo he writ

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me a Note to Mr. *Bruſh*, and the effect thereof was, the bearer hereof is a man of the greateſt light I ever yet heard ſpeak, and for ought I know inſteed of receiving of him you may receive an Angel, ſo to Mr. *Bruſh* I went, and preſented this Note, which he peruſed, ſo bid me come in, and told me if I had come a little ſooner, I might have ſeen Mr. *Copp*, who then had lately appeared in a moſt dreadful manner; ſo their being *Mary Lake*, we had ſome diſcourſe, but nothing to what was in me, however they told me, if next Sunday I would come to Mr. *Melis* in *Trinity-lane*, there would that day ſome friends meet. Now obſerve at this time my judgment was this, that there was no man could be free'd from ſin, till he had acted that ſo called ſin, as no ſin, this a certain time had been burning within me, yet durſt not reveal it to any, in that I thought none was able to receive it, and a great deſire I had to make trial, whether I ſhould be troubled or ſatisfied therein: ſo that

Seventhly, I took my progreſs into the *Wilderneſs*, and according to the day appointed, I found Mr. *Bruſh*, Mr. *Rawlinſon*, Mr. *Goldſmith*, with *Mary Lake*, and ſome four more: now *Mary Lake* was the chief ſpeaker, which in her diſcourſe was ſome thing agreeable, but not ſo high as was in me experienced, and what I then knew with boldneſs declared, in ſo much that *Mary Lake* being blind, asked who that was that ſpake? *Bruſh* ſaid the man that *Giles Calvert* ſent to us, ſo with many more words I affirmed that there was no ſin, but as man eſteemed it ſin, and therefore none can be free from ſin, till in purity it be acted as no ſin, for I judged that pure to me, which to a dark underſtanding was impure, for to the pure all things, yea all acts were pure: thus making the Scripture a writing of wax, I pleaded the words of *Paul*, *That I know and am perſwaded by the Lord Jeſus, that there was nothing unclean, but as man eſteemed it*, unfolding that was intended all acts, as well as meats and drinks, and therefore till you can lie with all women as one woman, and not judge it ſin, you can do nothing but ſin: now in Scripture I found a perfection ſpoken of, ſo that I underſtood no man could attain perfection but this way, at

which Mr. *Rawlinſon* was much taken, and *Sarah Kullin* being then preſent, did invite me to make trial of what I had expreſſed, ſo as I take it, after we parted, ſhe invited me to Mr. *Wats* in *Rood-lane*, where was one or two more like her ſelf, and as I take it, lay with me that night: now againſt next ſunday it was noiſed abroad what a rare man of knowledge was to ſpeak at Mr. *Bruſhes*; at which day there was a great company of men and women, both young and old; and ſo from day to day increaſed, that now I had choice of what before I aſpired after, inſomuch that it came to our Officers ears; but having got my pay I left them, and lodged in *Rood-lane*, where I had Clients many, that I was not able to anſwer all deſires, yet none knew our actions but our ſelves; however I was careful with whom I had to do. This luſtful principle encreaſed ſo much, that the Lord Mayor with his Officers came at midnight to take me, but knowing thereof, he was prevented. Now *Copp* was by himſelf with a company ranting and ſwearing, which I was ſeldom addicted to, onely proving by Scripture the truth of what I acted; and indeed *Solomons* Writings was the original of my filthy luſt, ſuppoſing I might take the ſame liberty as he did, not then underſtanding his Writings was no Scripture, that I was moved to write to the world what my Principle was, ſo brought to publick view a Book called *The Single Eye*, ſo that men and women came from many parts to ſee my face, and hear my knowledge in theſe things, being reſtleſs till they were made free, as then we called it. Now I being as they ſaid, *Captain of the Rant*, I had moſt of the principle women came to my lodging for knowledge, which then was called *The Head-quarters*. Now in the height of this ranting, I was made ſtill careful for moneys for my Wife, onely my body was given to other women: ſo our Company encreaſing, I wanted for nothing that heart could deſire, but at laſt it became a trade ſo common, that all the froth and ſcum broke forth into the height of this wickedneſs, yea began to be a publick reproach, that I broke up my Quarters, and went into the countrey to my Wife, where I had by the way diſciples plenty, which

which then Major *Rainsborough*, and Doctor *Barker* was minded for Mr. *Walis* of *Elford*, to there I met them, where was no small pleasure and delight in praising of a God that was an infinite nothing, what great and glorious things the Lord had done, in bringing us out of bondage, to the perfect liberty of the sons of God, and yet then the very notion of my heart was to all manner of theft, cheat, wrong, or injury that privately could be acted, though in tongue I professed the contrary, not considering I brake the Law in all points (murther excepted:) and the ground of this my judgement was, God had made all things good, so nothing evil but as man judged it; for I apprehended there was no such thing as theft, cheat, or a lie, but as man made it so: for if the creature had brought this world into no propriety, as *Mine* and *Thine*, there had been no such title as theft, cheat, or a lie; for the prevention hereof *Everard* and *Gerrard Winstanley* did dig up the Commons, that so all might have to live of themselves, then there had been no need of defrauding, but unity one with another, not then knowing this was the devils kingdom, and Reason lord thereof, and that Reason was naturally enclined to love it self above any other, and to gather to it self what riches and honor it could,- that so it might bear sway over its fellow creature; for I made it appear to *Gerrard Winstanley* there was a self-love and vain-glory nursed in his heart, that if possible, by digging to have gained people to him, by which his name might become great among the poor Commonalty of the Nation, as afterwards in him appeared a most shameful retreat from *Georges-hill*, with a spirit of pretended universality, to become a real Tithe-gatherer of propriety; so what by these things in others, and the experience of my own heart, I saw all that men spake or acted, was a lye and therefore my thought was, I had as good cheat for something among them, and that so I might live in prosperity with them, and not come under the lash of the Law; for here was the thought of my heart from that saying of *Solomon*, Eccles. 3. 19. *For that which befalleth the sons of men, befalleth beasts, even one thing befalleth them; as the one dieth,*

dieth, ſo dieth the other, yea, they have all one breath, ſo that a man hath no preheminence above a beaſt; for all is vanity, all go into one place, all are of the duſt, and all turn to duſt again. So that the 18th and 19th verſes of *Eccleſiaſtes* was the rule and direction of my ſpirit, to eat and to drink, and to delight my ſoul in the labor of my minde all the days of my life, which I thought God gave me as my portion, yea to rejoyce in it as the gift of God, as ſaid that wiſe Head-piece *Solomon*; for this then, and ever after, till I came to hear of a Commiſſion, was the thought of my heart, that in the grave there was no more remembrance of either joy or ſorrow after. For this I conceived, as I knew not what I was before I came in being, ſo for ever after I ſhould know nothing after this my being was diſſolved; but even as a ſtream from the Ocean was diſtinct in it ſelf while it was a ſtream, but when returned to the Ocean, was therein ſwallowed and become one with the Ocean; ſo the ſpirit of man while in the body, was diſtinct from God, but when death came it returned to God, and ſo became one with God, yea God it ſelf; yet notwithſtanding this, I had ſometimes a relenting light in my ſoul, fearing this ſhould not be ſo, as indeed it was contrary; but however, then a cup of Wine would waſh away this doubt.

But now to return to my progreſs, I came for *London* again, to viſit my old ſociety; which then *Mary Midleton* of *Chelsford*, and Mrs. *Star* was deeply in love with me, ſo having parted with Mrs. *Midleton*, Mrs. *Star* and I went up and down the countries as man and wife, ſpending our time in feaſting and drinking, ſo that Tavernes I called the houſe of God; and the Drawers, Meſſengers; and Sack, Divinity; reading in *Solomons* writings it muſt be ſo, in that it made glad the heart of God; which before, and at that time, we had ſeveral meetings of great company, and that ſome, no mean ones neither, where then, and at that time, they improved their liberty, where Doctor *Pagets* maid ſtripped her ſelf naked, and skipped among them, but being in a Cooks ſhop, there was no hunger, ſo that I kept my ſelf to Mrs. *Star*, pleading the lawfulneſs of our

our doings as aforesaid, concluding with *Solomon* all was vanity. In the interim the Parliament had issued forth several Warrants into the hands of Church-members, which knew me not by person, but by name, so could not take me, though several times met with me, that at last the Parliament to him that could bring me before them, would give a hundred pounds, so that one *Jones* for lucre of mony, knowing me, got a Warrant to apprehend me, who meeting me in the four swans within *Bishopsgate*, told me he had a Warrant from the High Court of Parliament to take me: Let me see it, said I, you have no power to serve it without an Officer, and so would have escaped, but could not the people so thronged about me, and a great tumult there was, some fighting with him for an Informer, but being a City Trooper, and some more of his Company with him, they carried me, as I take it, to Alderman *Andrews*, where they searched my Pockets; but having dropped an Almanack that had the names of such as sold my books for me, they found it, and carried it to the Parliament, so informed the House I was taken, and likewise desired to know what they should do with me, who gave Order to bring me by water to *Whitehall*-staires, and deliver me to *Barkstead's* Soldiers, where after a while a messenger was sent to take me into custody, where I was lodged in *Whitehall* over against the *Dial*, and two souldiers guarded me night and day, for which I was to pay; but some being of my principle, they would guard me for nothing, and a Captain of theirs would give me moneys; so after two days I was sent for before the Committee of Parliament to be examined: so being called in, they asked me my Name, my Countrey, with many such frivolous things; so coming to the business in hand, Mr. *Weaver* being the Chair-man, asked me if I lodged in *Rood-lane*? To which I answered, Once I did. Wherefore did you lodge there? Because I had a friend there of whom I hired a chamber. What company of men and women were those that came to you? To instance their names I cannot, but some came as they had business with me. Who were those women

in

in black Bags that came to you? As now I know not. But Mr. *Claxton*, we are informed, you have both wives and maids that lodgeth with you there? Thoſe that informed you, let them appear face to face, for I never lay with any but my own wife. No: for you call every woman your wife? I ſay I lye with none but my wife, according to Law, though in the unity of the ſpirit, I lye with all the creation. That is your ſophiſtication, but deal plainly before God and Man, did not you lye with none in *Rood lane*, and others places, beſides your wife? I do deal plainly as you, but I being a free born ſubject ought not to accuſe my ſelf, in that you are to prove your charge. Mr. *Claxton* confeſs the truth it, will be better for you: for we aſſure you ſhall ſuffer no wrong. What I know is trueth, I have, and ſhall ſpeak. What did you at Mrs. *Croes* in *Redcriff*? I had conference with the people. As you were preaching, you took a pipe of Tobacco, and women came and ſaluted ou, and others above was committing Adultery. This is more then remembe? No, you will not remember any thing againſt you: but ſurely you cannot but remember this *Alcoran* is yours, and theſe mens names your own hand writing. Yea I did write them, was not theſe men your diſciples? They were not mine, but their own. Did not Major *Rainsborough*, and the reſt lye with other women? Not as I know. But Mr. *Claxton* do you remember this book is yours? I never ſaw that before, but may be ſome of the like nature I have. Why did not you write this Book? That you are to prove. Here is the two firſt Letters of your name. What is that to me? it may ſerve for other names as well as mine. Did not Major *Rainsborough* and theſe men give you monies to print this Book? How ſhould they give me monies to print that which neither I nor they knew of. This Book muſt be yours, for it ſpeaks your language, ſuitable to your practiſe. I being but a ſtranger to you, how ſhould you know my language or practiſe? Though you will confeſs nothing, yet we have witneſs to prove it. Let them be examined in my preſence: So calling *Jones* hat betrayed me, did you never ſee Mr. *Claxton* lye with no woman?

man? I have heard him tal of ſuch things, but ſaw no act. Though you cannot, there is ſome will, wherefore Mr. *Claxton* deal plainly, that though you lay with none, yet did not you alow it none others? I ſaw no evil in them to diſalow; And Gentlemen let me ſpeak freely to you, Suppoſe I were your ſervant, entruſted with your ſecrets, and knew that you were Traitors againſt this preſent Power, would you take it well for me to impeach you, and bear witneſs againſt you? At which, either the Earl of *Denby*, or the Earl of *Salisbury* ſaid, No: Such a ſervant deſerved to be hang'd; at which they laughed and ſaid, this was a caſe of another nature. I ſay as it is in the one, ſo it is in the other. Well then, Mr. *Claxton*, you will not confeſs the trueth. You ſay you have witneſs to prove it. However the trueth I have confeſſ'd, and no more can be expected. Do not you know one *Copp*? Yea I know him, and that is all, for I have not ſeen him above two or three times. Then they ſaid, this is a ſad principle, which if not routed, all honeſt men will have their wives deluded. One of them ſaid, he feared not his wife ſhe was too old, ſo they diſmiſſed me to the place from whence I came, and ſaid we ſhall report it to the Houſe, that ſo with ſpeed you may have your trial, but I think it was about fourteen weeks before I received the Sentence of the Houſe, which took up the Houſe a day and half work, as *John Lilborn* ſaid, ſtood the Nation in a Thouſand pounds: And thus they ſate ſpending the Common-wealths monies, about friviolus things. Now having paſt ſome votes, at laſt they carried the day for my baniſhment, which vote that day was printed, and paſted upon many poſts about the City of *London*. *That* Lawrence Claxton *ſhould remain in* New bridwel *a moneth and a day, and then the High heriffe of* London *to conduct him to the High Sheriffe in* Kent, *and ſo to be baniſht* England, Scotland *and* Ireland, *and the Territories thereof during life, and Major* Rainsborough *to be no longer Juſtice during his life.* Now when my moneth was expired, their Vote was not executed, ſo after a while I came forth of priſon, and then took my journey with my wife to my houſe in *Stainfeild*,

field, and from thence I took my progress into Cambridgeshire, to the towns of *Foxton* and *Orwel* where still I continued my Ranting principle, with a high hand.

Now in the interim I attempted the art of Astrology and Physic., which in a short time I gained and therewith travelled up and down Cambridgeshire and *Essex*, as *Linton* and *Saffron-walden*, and other countrey towns, improving my skill to the utmost, that I had clients many, yet could not be therewith contended, but aspired to the art of Magick, so finding some of Doctor *Wards* and *Woolerds* Manuscripts, I improved my genius to fetch Goods back that were stoln, yea to raise spirits, and fetch treasure out of the earth, with many such diabolical actions, as a woman of *Sudbury* in *Suffolk* assisted me, pretending she could do by her witch-craft whatever she pleased; now something was done, but nothing to what I pretended, however monies I gained, and was up and down looked upon as a dangerous man, that the ignorant and religious people was afraid to come near me, yet this I may say, and speak the truth, that I have cured many desperate Diseases, and one time brought from *Glenford* to a village town wide of *Lanham* to Doctor *Clark*, two women and one man that had bewitched his daughter, who came in a frosty cold night, tormented in what then *Clerk* was a doing, and so after that his daughter was in perfect health, with many such like things, that it puffed up my spirit, and made many fools believe in me, for at that time I looked upon all was good, and God the author of all, and therefore have several times attempted to raise the devil, that so I might see what he was, but all in vain, so that I judged all was a lie, and that there was no devil at all, nor indeed no God but onely nature, for when I have perused the Scriptures I have found so much contradiction as then I conceived, that I had no faith in it at all, no more then a history, though I would talk of it, and speak from it for my own advantage, but if I had really then related my thoughts, I neither believed that *Adam* was the first Creature, but that there was a Creation before him, which world I thought was eternal, judging that land

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of *Nod* where *Cain* took his wife, was inhabited a long time before *Cain*, not conſidering that *Moſes* was the firſt Writer of Scripture, and that we were to look no further than what there was written; but I really believed no *Moſes*, Prophets, Chriſt, or Apoſtles, nor no reſurrection at all: for I underſtood that which was life in man, went into that infinite Bulk and Bigneſs, ſo called *God*, as a drop into the Ocean, and the body rotted in the grave, and for ever ſo to remain.

In the interim came forth a people called *Quakers*, with whom I had ſome diſcourſe, from whence I diſcerned that they were no further than burning brick in *Egypt*, though in a more purer way than their fathers before them; alſo their God, their devil, and their reſurrection and mine, was all one, onely they had a righteouſneſs of the Law which I had not; which righteouſneſs I then judged was to be deſtroyed, as well as my unrighteouſneſs, and ſo kept on my trade of Preaching, not minding any thing after death, but as aforeſaid, as alſo that great cheat of Aſtrology and Phyſick I practiſed, which not long after I was beneficed in *Merſland*, at *Terington* and St. *Johns*, and from thence went to *Snetſham* in *Norfolk*, where I was by all the Town received, and had moſt of their hands for the Preſentation, then for *London* I went, and going to viſit *Chetwood* my former acquaintance, ſhe, with the wife of *Middleton*, related to me the two Witneſſes; ſo having ſome conference with *Reeve* the prophet, and reading his Writings, I was in a trembling condition: the nature thereof you may read in the *Introduction* of that Book [*Look about you, for the devil that you fear is in you*] conſidering how ſadly I had theſe many years ſpent my time, and that in none of theſe ſeven Churches could I finde the true God, or right devil; for indeed that is not in the leaſt deſired, onely to prate of him, and pray to him we knew not, though it is written, *It is life eternal to know the true God*, yet that none of them mindes, but from education believeth him to be an eternal, infinite Spirit, here, there, and every where; which after I was fully perſwaded, that there was to be three Commiſſions upon this earth, to bear record to the three Titles above, and that this was the

laſt of thoſe three: upon the belief of this I came to the knowledge of the two Seeds, by which I knew the nature and form of the true God, and the right devil, which in all my travels through the ſeven Chuches I could never finde, in that now I ſee, it was onely from the revelation of this Commiſſion to make it known.

Now being at my Journeys end, as in point of notional worſhip, I came to ſee the vaſt difference of Faith from Reaſon, which before I conclude, you ſhall hear, and how that from Faiths royal Prerogative all its ſeed in *Adam* was ſaved, and all Reaſon in the fallen Angel was damned, from whence I came to know my election and pardon of all my former tranſgreſſions; after which my revelation growing, moved me to publiſh to the world, what my Father was, where he liveth, and the glory of his houſe, as is confirmed by my writings now in publick; ſo that now I can ſay, of all my formal righteouſneſs, and profeſſed wickedneſs, I am ſtripped naked, and in room thereof clothed with innocency of life, perfect aſſurance, and ſeed of diſcerning with the ſpirit of revelation. I ſhall proceed to anſwer ſome Objections that may be raiſed, as unto what I have already aſſerted.

Firſt, *What had become of me if I had died before I heard of this ſpiritual laſt Commiſſion?*

Anſw. I infallibly againſt angels and men, that is, againſt all the ſeed of Reaſon whatſoever, declare, That if I had dyed in my time of wickedneſs, I had been damned. But then, you may ſay, How can this can be that I ſhould have been damned then, and not now, when the determinate will of God ſtands ſure, *that who before of old ordained to condemnation*, or ſalvation, ſo ſhall election ſtand. As unto this, it is to be ſeriouſly minded, that while I was travelling through *Egypt*, or the wilderneſs, I knew no more than *Paul* when he was a blaſphemer, that I was elected as I do now, and at that time had no perfect peace, nor fully perſwaded of my ſalvation at all; for alas, what comfort is it to a man that is ready to be turned over the ladder, and knoweth of no pardon, no more than a man that dieth in ignorance knoweth his election; ſo that you may

may behold what a ſad journey moſt part of the world do travel in, even betwixt hope and deſpair; for it is unpoſſible that a ſoul in unbelief ſhould know whether he be elected, or no: and therefore that Determination or Decree, doth produce a means to effect the end of that mans ſalvation, ſpringing in the Well of Faith, the knowledge of his election, with a protection or preſervation of its own ſeed from the breach of the Law; or if that ſoul have tranſgreſſed the Law, he ſhall not die till a Commiſſion come in being; ſo that I being elected, and yet having broken the Law, there was a neceſſity I ſhould live till this laſt came in being, for the Law would have condemned me, and God would have diſowned me, ſo that there was no other way but the belief of this Commiſſion, to free me from the law of ſin and death, into eternal life.

But you may ſay, *What became of all the Seed of Faith ſince the Apoſtles to this day, that had not a Commiſſion to believe in, and lived in wickedneſs as I have done?*

As unto this I ſay, all the ſeed of *Adam* that lived till capable of a Law, did not commit wickedneſs, but was kept innocent from breaking the Law; which innocency of life, though not knowing any other, but Jeſus Chriſt the Son of God, ſhall be raiſed to glory. For this is to be underſtood, that till within theſe thirty years, there hath no angels ſounded above the Baptiſt, and therefore no ſuch provocation to tempt the Seed of Faith to commit ſin, as hath been in my days; for the ſixth angel ſounding forth, the Ranting principle broke forth all maner of wickedneſs with a high hand, that did tempt ſuch as I to break the Law as themſelves: So that I ſay, the Seed of Faith that was not to live till this Commiſſion came in being, had no ſuch provocation, there being no ſuch tempting Diſpenſations then apparent as they are now, ſo that they were all kept innocent in their lives from committing of ſin, [minde this] not from thinking or ſpeaking, but from acting ſin, without which act the Law will not condemn thee; for the Law hath nothing to do with the heart, but an act, as it is written, not he that thinketh, *but he that committeth ſin, is of the devil*; therefore blame not my revelation that it frees you

from looks or thoughts upon a woman, but rather rejoyce eſcaping the act, [otherways none] no not the Seed of Faith would be free from ſin, and then how will you blot out that ſaying, 1 *John* 3. 9. *Whoſoever is born of God doth not commit ſin, for his ſeed remaineth in him, and he cannot ſin*; and all the account is given, *becauſe he is born of God.* Then in the firſt of *John* 1.8. *if we ſay we have no ſin we deceive our ſelves, and the truth is not in us*, ſhall your blinde learned Reaſon that never ſpake this, or ſhall I in the height of revelation of the ſame Seed interpret this? that he that is born of God, as I am now, cannot ſin to act; but if I, that am according to birth, of the Royal Seed, ſhould ſay I have no motion to ſin, I ſhould be a liar like unto the ſeed of Reaſon: will ye believe this, or believe your lying imagination? however for your further ſatisfaction, read the thirteenth Chapter of my *Paradiſical Dialogue*; ſo that I ſhall return to the next *Query*, where you may ſay,

Shall all the Seed of Faith now living believe in this Commiſſion, or ſhall not the innocency of life as well ſave them now, as when there was no Commiſsion in being?

Anſwer. There is not any of the ſeed of Faith now living, but if he hear the report of our Commiſſion ſound in his ears, though never ſee our faces, but he will believe; though all the ſeed of reaſon hear or read never ſo often, they cannot believe; but ſo many of the ſeed of *Adam* now living in this our day, that do not hear of us, nor ſee our writings, and ſo die in the ignorance of it, through their innocency of life, ſhall be happy on the other ſide of death, though not ſo happy here; for this I know, the real belief of a Commiſſion, gives perfect peace and full aſſurance here, which the other wants, and therefore I infallibly ſay it is ſeven times more happy to be ſaved by a Commiſſion, then by innocency of life; ſo that O the freedom, O the freedom that attends a Commiſſion!

Again you may ſay, may a man receive your Commiſſion with joy in the belief of it, and afterwards fall away to eternal perdition?

Anſwer. Yea, a ſoul may come to believe the glorious perſon

ſon of our Lord Jeſus, to be the onely God, and no other infinite ſpirit beſides him, and that he is now with the ſame perſon that was crucified, in heaven glorified; as unto this I have known ſome in *London*, and elſewhere, that have rejoyced in it, and contended for it; and yet not being rooted in the right ſeed, it hath in time withered and turned back to *Egypt* again. Now the main thing of ſuch a ones falling away, in plains tearmes, is, becauſe they are according to birth the ſeed of reaſon, which may go very far with a believer in this Commiſſion, as *Judas* with the twelve, before it be betrayed, which at one time or another, it is found out and ſo condemned; as the devil *Langly* exceeded moſt of you in this nature, yet not believing a prerogative, fell off and deſpiſed, for which, is now eternally damned.

Again one thing more is required to be *anſwered*, whether one that hath received the truth in the power and love thereof, whether ſuch a real believer, may be left over to break the law? and if, how delivered?

Anſwer. As unto this I ſay, a Commiſſion changeth not the nature of man, but according as he was in unbelief ſubject to paſſion, wanton carriage, or fooliſh language, and ſuch like, [as is too much apparent in ſome] will now and then be tempting that ſoul ſutable to its nature to diſturb its preſent peace, through the fragments of reaſons nature that hangs about him; but as to action in breach of the law, a Commiſſion doth change the power of corruption, that though he is not free from motions to ſin, yet he is freed from the act of ſin, this I finde in my own ſoul the truth of what I write, but whether an elected veſſel in the real belief of this may once ſlip into act, as Adultery and ſuch like, and by returning with faith in the Commiſſion may be recovered, this I cannot gain-ſay but it may be ſo, as I could inſtance: but let it be a warning to all others hereafter, and remember I told thee ſo.

Secondly, *whether ever any, let him be of what Church ſoever, had a Call, or were ſent by voice of words, but a Commiſſion onely?*

Anſwer. As I am endued with the height of revelation, that neither angel nor man can take from me, which revelation hath

hath begot most of you into the belief of this Commission, let me tell you that I write not now as I have done formerly, when I was in *Egypt* or the *Wilderness*, but I write infallibly, without the help of any, as it flows by inspiration or revelation from my Royal seed-spring, otherways it were no other but reasons imagination, and so it may be true or it may be false, as all your Philosophical Histories are dubious to the writter, and indeed the Reader thereof doth approve of no other language, but what is written with a proviso, under correction to better judgements, and more learned Fathers, and so like a School-boy that writes by direction of his Tutor, so do ye write the Commissioners revelation and form of worship contained in *Moses*, the Prophets, and Apostles, and not from any revelation of your own, though you write you have a call from God, & are sent of God, when you shall hear to the contrary; as suffer me but to instance the vain deceit and judgling carriage of the *Quakers*, in their pretended Errands and Messages to Kings and Rulers of this kingdom, publishing they are sent of God, to tell them, that for their pride, their vain-glory, oppression, and cruelty, they shall have their kingdom rent from them, as it was from *Oliver* before them; with these and such like delusion their souls are possest withal, that they are sent, and by the Lord commanded, when in the revelation from my seed-spring I know they are liars, as in these particulars shall appear:

First, That God did never speak to any of you, as he spake to *Moses*, *Paul*, and *John Reeve*, if you can deal plainly, and tell me if ever Christ from the Throne of glory, did ever audibly to the hearing of the ear, say: *George Fox*, *Francis Howgil*, or *John Harwood*, or any of you, behold I send you forth as my onely true and last Messenger to the King of *England*, or any other, to reprove them of sin whatsoever, and therefore ye go beyond the seas to other Nations, saying the Lord sent you, when from that spirit of divine voyce that spake to *John Reeve* I tell you, you go forth in the strength of Reasons lying imagination, which you call your light within you, and so receive the reward of your deceit upon you, as in the day of account you

you ſhall know that you run before you were ſent.

Secondly, Do but obſerve the nature and form of words you deliver, are they any other but borrowed from the Prophets and Apoſtles, and ſo ye run up and down with their Commiſſion, and their Doctrine, repeating what they ſaid to Kings and Rulers, who were truly and really ſent forth to deliver what they ſpake: now you in the vertue of anothers Commiſſion, buſie your ſelves like the ſeven ſons of one *Sceva a* Jew, *who were vagabonds exorciſts, that took upon them to call over them which had evil ſpirits, in the name of the Lord Jeſus, ſaying, we adjure you by Jeſus whom* Paul *preacheth*; So ye *Baptiſts, Ranters*, but eſpecially the *Quakers* like vagabonds run with the letter and doctrine of *Moſes*, the Prophets and Apoſtles, ſaying, *Hear this I pray you, ye heads of the houſe of* Jacob, *and princes of* Iſrael, *that abhor judgement and pervert all equity, they build up* Sion *with blood, and* Jeruſalem *with iniquity, the heads thereof judge for reward, the Prieſts thereof teach for hire, and the Prophets thereof divine for money, and yet they will lean upon the Lord, and ſay, is not the Lord among us, none evil can come unto us?* With theſe and ſuch like ſayings ye go to the Magiſtrate and Miniſtery, and bid them remember what judgements the Prophets threatned againſt ſuch Magiſtrates and Miniſters, not in the leaſt having any call or command from God in your ſelves, without doubt and confidence, ſaying, I *George Fox* by vertue of my Commiſſion that was given by voyce of words from the mouth of the Lord Jeſus in the higheſt heavens, do infallibly againſt Angels and Men, tell thee O King, the Parliament, and Clergy of *England*, if ye eſtabliſh ſuperſtition, and bind mens conſciences to your form of worſhip, then know this O King, that the God that bid me tell thee, contrary to thy expectation, will rayſe up an Army againſt thee, that will blaſt the proceedings of thee and thy Councel for ever, I ſay were ye thus called, and ſent forth, as ye were true Meſſengers, ſo would your Meſſage take effect, and prove true as ye have publiſhed.

But poor blind Creatures! as really & truly as I know Chriſt Jeſus the onely God, and the Prophets and Apoſtles commiſſioned,

missioned, and sent forth by God, so I as really believe ye neither know God, nor were sent forth by God, but are meer dissemblers, and liars against the true Commissioners of God; therefore I tell thee O King, and all powers under thee, that this last Commission of the eternal spirit, hath no Messages to Kings or Rulers touching the Affairs of their Government, and therefore as we have none, (thou shalt not need to credit any other,) onely this by permission I say, if thou so far retain the Prerogative in thy own hand, that no Councel, Bishop, or Minister, may molest or persecute any Opinion, Church, or Dispensation, much our Commission, that is contrary to them in matter of worship, provided they be obedient to thy Government in just civil things, I say, if this be really performed by thee, thou and thy posterity, after thee may in safety reign during this perishing world: This being done, let him be of what Church soever, that shall not without Hipocrysi of heart, be free from writing or fighting against thee, be punished.

Now ye being false, and not sent, notwithstanding all your woes, plagues, and judgements you threaten against a Kingdom (if they do but repent) though they punish with death, they be happy as well as you, not knowing your own happiness, you cannot discern anothers (when it is not so in ours) you having no discerning of the two seeds, *viz.* Faith and Reason, you make no differences, but wraps up all together, not knowing but Gods nature, Reason and Mans the same, and so if man do but hearken to the light of Reason within him, he shall be as happy as the Seed of Faith, *and thus ye are blind leaders of the blind*, pretending a Call, and sent of God, and yet you know not the form of God, nor his nature, thinking that in *Adam* both Seeds die, and so in Christ both shall be made alive, not at all that Reason was damned in the Angelical Serpent, and Faith saved in *Adam*, as in the *Quakers Downfal*, and the *Dialogue* is opened at large.

Now had you been Commissionated by voice of words, or were it possible to think of an inward Commission by the Spirit, as some of your fine-spun Professors do imagine, and to me

was

was confirmed by one *Laine*, but especially by one *Tomlinson* a very moderate Brother of yours, that would prove a Call from God, to sent of God by the succession of the Spirit, not understanding that the Apostles, who were the Stewards and Shepherds of Christ, and in his stead had the power of salvation and condemnation committed to them, were all put to death, with every Believer of them: then how do you think they, being the conduct of the Spirit, that you should receive the influence of their Authority from a dead letter, and that conveyed to you by the Roman power that put the true Commissioners to death, it is like there should be a succession, either by voice of words, or the Spirit, when you have neither of them both, but the light or learning of Reasons imaginations onely.

And then, if ye had a Commission by voice of words, so sent of God, your language and your worship would speak for you, that you were the true and last Messenger of the third and last Commission; but alas, poor deluded creatures, you are the last angel that ever shall sound a pretended truth, yet real lying notion that ever shall appear in this world; concerning which both the Ministers and Hearers are ignorant, that the Teachers of the *Quakers* are the last angel spoken of in the tenth of *Revelation*, the seventh verse, saying, *In the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, &c.* Now ye angels or teachers of the *Quakers*, do ye send forth any other doctrine or worship, but what is recorded in the Commission of others, even what they said, and did do, as near as you can do ye; which if ye had a discerning spirit, you would without censure or envy, read our revelation flowing from a Commission, doth far transcend the language or worship of either of the two Commissions before us; but ye being of the angels nature, so the seed of the Serpent, ye know not the voice of a Commission from a Dispensation: As touching which, I shall open in the third Objection or Query, thus stated.

Whether there ever was more then one truth at a time, and whether there be more than one way to this truth? and if but one way,

which is the true and onely way to the truth.

Anſwer. Truth was never known till a Commiſsioner was choſen, ſo that till *Moſes* there was nothing made manifeſt what was truth, and what not, and therefore from thence it muſt be enquired, whether there was more then one truth, he being the firſt writer of truth that ever was, doth all along tell you in his days, there was but one truth, the knowledge of which conſiſted in the true God, as in the firſt Command it is written, *thou ſhalt have no other Gods before me*, ſo that this was the onely true God; and therefore ſaith *Moſes*, *there is none like unto the Lord our God*: and again it is written, *thou art the God, even thou alone*; and ſo all along the Prophets do declare no other God, but what before by *Moſes* was revealed, crying, *I am God, and there is none elſe, I am God, and there is none like me, therefore look unto me, for I am God, and there is none beſides me.*

Then, and at that time, this was truth, yea the onely truth, and no truth beſides it, though then moſt part of the world worſhipped idols, yea a lie of their own invention, yet in the Commiſsion of *Moſes* was truth onely maintained, under the title of God the Father.

Secondly, After this God became fleſh, as it is written, *The word was with God, yea the word was God, which word was made fleſh, and dwelt amongſt men*, now called a Son, or Chriſt the Savior, which none but the Apoſtles Commiſsion believed, as from their ſaying, *there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we muſt be ſaved*, with many ſayings to that purpoſe, proving that Chriſt was the Son of God.

Then, and at that time, this was truth, yea the onely truth, and no truth beſides it, though then there were both Saducees and Phariſees, yea moſt part of the Jews, and almoſt all the Gentiles worſhipped a God beſides Chriſt, yet in the Commiſsion of the Apoſtles, was truth onely revealed under the title of Chriſt the Son.

Thirdly, After this, yea in this inſtant time, both Father and Son are in this our third and laſt Commiſsion made manifeſt to be the holy Ghoſt, or one entire ſpiritual body, yea the ſame body,

body, and no other body but what upon the crosse suffered, is now in heaven glorified, both Father and Son, one spiritual form, Creator of heaven and earth, so called the Lord Jesus.

Now, and at this time, this is the truth, yea the onely truth, and no truth besides it, though all the Seven Churches pretends to know truth, and so by their professions holds forth seven truths, yet I infalibly say in this our last Commission, this is the truth onely revealed under the title of Christ, as he is a spiritual person not in us, but above us, in his own kingdom of glory, blessed for ever.

And yet they are not three truths, but one truth, as in respect of God the Father, God the Son, and God the holy Ghost, which three are not persons, but titles comprehended in the single person of Christ alone; but as in relation to their Commissions in time, they are three Commissions, in three distinct persons, though they all three acknowledge themselves to have their authority from one and the same person; for that person which spake to *Moses*, spake to *Paul*, and spake to *John Reeve*: the truth of this is clearly revealed in my *Dialogue*, the second and twelfth chapters, so that I shall omit to speake any further, onely leave you to that saying of *Paul*, *he that descended, is the same also that ascended*, so that still it is but one, and the same person, even Jesus alone, but:

Secondly, As there is but one truth, so there is but one way to this truth, and that must needs flow from them that are the publishers of truth; for it is ridiculous to think that man or men which knowes not truth, should be the way of truth, [therefore take notice and do not forget,] as there is no truth but in a Commission, so there is none, let them be never so wise or eloquent, yea righteous, or heaven-like, if he be not a Commissioner sent by voyce of words, and that audibly to the hearing of the ears, from the spirit of divine faith that cannot lie, I tell thee thou art no shepherd, but an hireling; no son, but a bastard; no true Commissioner, but a counterfeit: as deal plainly, can any of you the Angels or Teachers of the seven Churches, infalibly say, that God by voyce of words, sent you as he did *Moses*, the Apostles, and *John Reeve*? certain I am

without doubt ye cannot. O then what do you think will be the end of all your profound lies, that you have preached in publick and private, by taking upon you successively to be Prophets, Apostles, and Ministers from anothers Authority, and thereby you cavel and rayle one brother against another, saying the Papist, Episcopal, Presbyterian, and Independent, are false Prophets and hirelings, and they say, you Baptists, Ranters, and Quakers are false Prophets and deluders, and who shall be judge of your pretended Commissions, and railing accusations, shall the Scripture that is a dead letter? or shall I that have the spirit of revelation? can any of you tell me, who made you Ministers and Teachers over others? the Apostles and their Bishops disowns you, their writings say your fathers murthered all of them, so that there was not one left alive to continue their succession, by imposition of hands or otherways, so that what can you say for your selves, but that the Pope, who was made the supream head over the dead letter, and that Roman power establishing it, by its supream authority, you have your ordination from Ministers, and from no other God or spirit, but the dead letter onely: now let me tell you all, and yet not I, but the spirit of revelation, flowing from my seed-spring, [mind what I say,] that I am as truely sent now, as *Timothy* and *Titus* were in their Commission, and therefore I can without fear, and with a real undoubted confidence say, that you are all but the Messengers of Men, and therefore the next time ye read or preach from the tenth of *John*, remember that you read your selves the false Prophets and Hirelings there quoted, as in the day of eternal account you shall finde the truth of what I say, but then too late, and in vain will your doleful cries be.

But you may object and say from those words of Christ, saying, *I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine*, from hence you may cavel, and say there is no mortal man a true shepherd, but Christ alone, and that because he saith, *I am the way, and the truth, and the life.*

Answer. I grant that Christ is the great shepherd of the sheep, and was the onely Prophet then living, yea then and at that

that time, he was the onely way to eternal life, and all that believed in him were his sheep and followed him, for then the Apostles were but sheep, and Christ their shepherd, but after that our Lord and good shepherd, had by his blood purchased eternal happiness for his sheep, then he Commissionated his Apostles to be shepherds in his place, as before he was ascended he bid Peter *feed his sheep*, which after they were indued with power from on high, they went forth in the strength of their Commission, and declared themselves to be Ambassadors and Stewards in Christs stead, yea the way and life of their salvation; and therefore saith Paul, *brethren be followers together of me*, knowing assuredly if they believed in their Doctrine, they should be as happy, as when they believed the words of Christ from his own mouth, so that this know there is no going to God, but by Commissioners, for who they curse are cursed, and who they bless are blessed, in that the revelation thereof hath an infallible discerning who are the seed of *Adam*, and who are the seed of the Serpent.

And therefore take notice if Christ be the way now, and teacheth you by his spirit, why are you not therewith contented, and keep every man at home, but run up and down the City, some to publick and some to private, neglecting waiting upon God, and teachings of his spirits, to wait upon men and their vain teaching? and so the priests tells them they must wait upon God, in the use of means, imitating a true authority saying the Lord sent them, when they neither know the Lord nor their Message, so being but mans Ministers, they compel men to go the broad way with them to destruction.

4. Again, you read but of two ways, a true and a false, the narrow way, and the broad way, that is, the way of Faith, and the way of Reason, so unless you deny Scripture, you cannot but confess, that as truth is onely in a Commission, so then of necessity it must follow, that the true Commissioners are the narrow way, and way of Faith to eternal Truth. So that ye seven Churches what do you say for your selves? are you right, or are you wrong? are you true, or are you false? Sure I am you do all say, that you are in the truth, and the ways of truth:

truth: if ye will not believe me, enquire of *Moses* and the Apostles, and see if they do not say that there was no truth but in a Commission, and ask them if truth were ever established by Authority? [minde this] sure I am you will finde it recorded, that truth was onely contained in one Commission to another, and that truth was ever persecuted by Authority. Have you not read this? do ye not believe this? then from the letter I shall prove this, that the hypocritical *Scribes and Pharisees did build the tombs of the Prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, and say, if we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the Prophets*: So your fathers murthered Christ and all his Apostles, and since their children have established the Ordinance of the Apostles, and with tradition and learned Philosophy, have garnished the letter of the Scriptures with a penalty, that if any one do speak against *Moses*, Christ, or the Apostles, they shall be punished; so that ye be witnesses unto your selves that you seven Churches are the onely heires of them that killed the Apostles.

As now the last and highest truth is held forth in this our last Commission, as in my writings I have told you again and again, that there is no truth but what is revealed by us, and no way to eternal happiness without us, so that when you have established that so called *Religion* I then expect no other dealings at your hands, than our brethren the Apostles found from your fore-fathers; and then your sons in the next generation, will say of you as now ye say of your fathers; but wo, wo, if not for fear, yet for shame leave off your tearming your selves the Churches of Christ, and that your traditioned notional Forms are the true ways of Christ, that so you may be more excusable in the eternal Account of the Lord. Do but enquire whether the way of *Moses* and the Prophets be your rule now, when it was not the Apostles in their time? and shall you that belong neither to *Moses*, nor the Apostles, by succession of voice of words, or inspiration of the spirit, ordain your selves Bishops and Ministers by the dead letter of the Apostles, and then you fetch your garb and attire from the dead letter

letter of *Moses*? all which was abolished in the death of Christ, [and by the Apostles detested against as beggarly rudiments] so no examples for any mortals now living to imitate, [minde that] unless you do wilfully shut your eyes against what the Apostles say, and what I now write; for the glory of this perishing world hath so bewitched you to believe a lye, that you wrest the Scripture into an image of wax, framing it according to Reasons imagination, your onely idol, god, and savior, when from an infallible spirit I say, there is not one sentence in the letter of Scripture to warrant any of you seven Churches in your Forms of Worship, nor can you from any grounds of reason make *England* believe that you are the true Bishops and Ministers of God, unless you could make it apparent that you were all Jewes, and all the world besides you Heathen Gentiles, that worshipped gods of stocks and stones, then you might have some colour to practise the Rites and Ceremonies of the Law; which if you could, you must not onely wear *Aarons* holy garments, but your male, both yong and old, must be circumcised, and have your peace-offerings and burnt-offerings of the blood of bulls and goats, with all other Ceremonies thereunto belonging, that so the ignorant might have some faith in you; but in that most of your Churches knows that the Jews and the Gentiles are by mixture of seeds become one Nation, they can tell you there was no Bishops, Elders, or Deacons in *Moses* or the Prophets time, and therefore ye pretending a succession from *Timothy* and *Titus*, your younger brethren, *viz.* Presbyterian and Independent, *&c.* can inform you, if ye were true Bishops, in stead of the holy garments of *Aaron*, you must with *Timothy* and *Titus* wear a mean garb, as plain habit, and such like, and not to go with long Gowns and Sircingles; and in stead of variety of Dainties, you must eat with no gentile, but suffer want and hunger; and in stead of a Coach and six horses, you must go on foot; yea, in room of many Attendance to serve and wait upon you, you must wait and serve your flock: if you had believed Scripture, as ye pretend to make it your rule, why do ye not imitate the true and great Bishop Christ Jesus? who saith, he that is the great-

eſt, and will bear rule, muſt be a ſervant to others, ſaying, though I be the ſon of God, nay God himſelf, yet I waſhed my diſciples feet, and there was no room for me in an Inn, but a manger, and I never ride but once, and that was upon an Aſs, thus was I humbled, and abaſed my ſelf; and though ye pretend a Commiſsion ſucceſsively, yet ye altogether exalt and honor your ſelves, in contempt of me and my true Commiſsioners; So that as I am the true and onely Biſhop now living, ſeeing ye boaſt of things that was *Moſes* and the Apoſtles labors, and like School-boys, vaunt your tongues in other mens rules of things made ready to your hands, [minde what I ſay] yet whether ye do or not, I infallibly tell you from that ſpirit of divine voice, in the perſon of the Lord Jeſus, that ſpake to *Moſes*, *Paul*, and *John Reeve*, that you have now no goard to ſhadow you from that dreadful ſentence of this our ſpiritual and laſt Commiſſion of the moſt high and mighty God, the Man Jeſus.

Now having ſufficiently ſhewen ou, that all Churches, Diſpenſations, Gifts, or Ways are falſe, not proceeding from a Commiſsion, and that from a Commiſsion then in force and being; but all the ſeven Sons, or Churches, have all proceeded from no Commiſsion, but from Reaſons invention to eſtabliſh others revelations for their rule: ſo now I ſhall ſhew you in a few particulars, that ye all run in vain, and ſo do loſe the prize of the high calling, the knowledge of the Man Jeſus.

Firſt, in that ye know not who he is, nor where he is, that ye run to, and therefore ſome of you run after a God of three perſons, when you have neither Scripture nor revelation for to warrant you the truth of your journey; and others of you run after a God of an infinite Spirit and two perſons; and the reſt of you run after a God that hath no perſon at all, ſo that I ſay you are all out of the way, and really believes no God at all, neither can any of you ſay with *Paul*, *I know in whom I have believed*; but ye run doubtfully, not being fully perſwaded that the God ye preach and pray to, is the true God, neither indeed do ye trouble your ſelves to know what he is, but onely

ſpeak

ſpeak the word Father, the word God, the word Chriſt Jeſus, as a tradition educated by your fore-fathers, eſtabliſhed in your Articles, Creeds, and Catechiſms, exerciſing your diſciples from them to believe as the Church believes, not having faith in any thing ye profeſs: As deal plainly and impartially, anſwer me upon your ſalvation, as you hope to ſee your God in glory, that you are fully perſwaded, that your God and your devil is the way, and the truth, and no other beſides it? I ſay not any of you can avouch it as the principle of your aſſurance, that the God ye profeſs is the true God, and yet what a rabble rout of pretended believers there is among you, that ſome of your members ſwears, God damn them they believe in God, be drunk, and believe in God; whore, and believe in God; cheat, and believe in God; bear falſe witneſs, and believe in God; tyrannize and oppreſs, and believe in God; nay, the Land lords for a Quarters-rent will turn the poor into the ſtreets, and yet believe in God; and the great devil Broker will uſurp 30 or 40 pound in the hundred, and profeſt he believes in God; ſo that I ſay ye have made a by-word of the name *God*, and a very pack-horſe of the Scriptures to ſeal up your own dammations; as when I was among you, this was my condition, and the ſtate of you all, in one of thoſe evils or another; ſo that with admiration, againſt angel or man I can ſay, I have not run in vain, that thoſe which in the knowledge of God I thought was before me, are all left behinde zealous in their devotions to the unknown God whom ye ignorantly worſhip, which in all my writings I have revealed, that your God cannot be known neither to Saint or Angel, having no form or perſon, but an infinite eternal Spirit without a body, how do you think your nothing-God ſhould be known? nay, had *Abraham* known no other God than ye profeſs, he had never been tempted to ſlay his ſon, in that from ſuch a God there had been no invitation, neither had his confidence been ſo far fixed, as to obey a command without a body; but he really believing that his God was no ſhadow, but a perſonal ſubſtance, made *Abraham* ſo willing to offer up his onely beloved ſon *Iſaac*. Now your faith having no foundation to

pitch its confidence upon, but as in a Lottery men venture their money, ſo do ye in your worſhip venture your ſalvation, not really knowing at all that your preaching and praying is to a true God, onely ye hope well, yea hope the beſt, that you are in the truth and the right way, and that your God is the God, when I infalibly tell you he that runneth to God, or profeſſeth God *muſt believe him as he is*, [O mind what you read] not as he is in your hope, and vain imagination, but as he is really in himſelf, a glorious perſonall God: and know this while you are in hope you do not believe, *for hope that is ſeen is not hope, for what a man ſeeth, why doth he yet hope for?* thou knowing God is true as thou believes, hope is ſwallowed up in that belief, *for the hope of the hypocrite ſhall periſh*, but when thou canſt without doubt ſay as *John* ſaid, we hope not, *but we believe, and really know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedneſs, and we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an underſtanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jeſus Chriſt, this is the true God and eternal life*, once come to this, thy hope is no more hope, but becomes faith.

Which I am certain there is not any of you the ſeven Churches, that knowes the true God, and the right devil, the true heaven, and right hell, no without doubt I know that all your hopes, ſo living and ſo dying, that hath been acquainted with our Commiſſion, ſhall eternally periſh: and furthermore I know, that if ye did believe *Moſes*, Chriſt, and the Apoſtles, ye would believe me, I knowing that ſo many of you as really believes the two former Commiſſions, if ye hear but our report, will as really believe in us, though I know all of you will ſay, ye believe in *Moſes*, Chriſt, and the Apoſtles, but ye cannot believe in us: And why do ye not underſtand we are the laſt Commiſſion, as they the firſt and ſecond? even nothing but becauſe ye know us alive, and by tradition are educated to believe them though dead; for while Chriſt and the Apoſtles was among them, they were of no more eſteem than we. As to this purpoſe, ſaith *Paul*, *His letters* [*ſay they*] *are weighty and powerful, but his bodily preſence is weak, and his ſpeech contemptible,*

temptible, so while any living knows our persons, for that our writings are despised; however, let me resolve you why you cannot believe our words now living, is because ye are of the seed of unbelief, reason, the devil, and take this for truth, ye do not believe *Moses*, Christ, nor the Apostles; ye hope ye do, ye say ye do, as the Jewes said of CHRIST, *We are* Moses *Disciples, we know that God spake unto* Moses, *as for this fellow we know not from whence he is.* Who would have thought but what they said, was truth; yet Christ tells them *John* 5.45. *Had ye believed* Moses, *ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me, but if ye believe not his writings, how should ye believe my words?* So that from the Lord of Glory I say, did ye really believe the writings of *Moses*, Christ and the Apostles, ye would believe in our words; but I know ye do not believe, but only confess and profess for your own honor and advantage, which in the hour of death ye will be all at a loss what will become of your souls, for all your preaching and praying to your God on your bed of sickness, you have all your work to do, so that it is evident, you are all out of the way, yea still in *Egypt* or the *Wilderness.*

Fifthly, Again ye run in vain, not knowing the Scriptures; for as they were written by men, inspired with the spirit of revelation, so none can give any true interpretation thereof, but those endued with the same spirit, and that I really believe none of you can with safety say ye are the men, I certainly knowing, that your learning is from the seed of Reason, which is the wisdom of flesh; So that it is unpossible ye should discern the plain language of Faith, or give a true interpretation of Scripture written by the seed of Faith, and therefore ye know not what Scripture is, and what not, though I acknowledge your wisdom of Reason, can translate Hebrew, Greek, and Latine into English, and this being done, ye make your ignorant disciples believe that you have interpreted the Scripture, when I know that the Scripture in its divine sence, is as a ridle not unfolded unto all the learned Rabbies of the world; furthermore I can with confidence say, that when any of you do assume an interpretation, you dare not conclude that is the true

meaning thereof, and no other, and yet ſuch of you who are of a contrary ſeed to the Writers of Scripture, do take upon you to be Judge of their writings, when I ſay, as I ſaid before, you underſtand not what you are your ſelves, nor what will become of another, neither doth the wiſdom of Faith that ſearcheth the high things, yea the deep things of God, proceed from the learned education of Univerſities, ſo no ſpiritual men to judge of things concerning God, and his kingdom; O then why will ye preſume to ſay this or that is blaſphemy, when you know not what God nor his nature is, the devil or his nature is, and yet none ſo forward to cry down thoſe that are truly ſent, for falſe prophets, deluders, backſliders, and blaſphemers, when now I infallibly know that you onely are the men; as do but look back to the true and falſe prophets of old, and then if you can [ſpeak the truth] that whether the true be more in number than the falſe. *Elijah* ſaith, [*I even I*] *onely remain a Prophet of the Lord*, *but* Baals *prieſts are four hundred and fifty men.* And ſo all along in the ſecond Commiſſion there was a great number of falſe, to the ſmall number of true: As now in our days what multitudes there is of falſe prophets and falſe teachers, to one true prophet and true Biſhop? for this you muſt grant, that if ye all be true, then *Moſes*, the Apoſtles and we, are falſe, and if ſo, in vain were that ſaying of Chriſt, *Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few* (not multitudes) *but few there be that finde it*; which if ye were all true prophets, or true teachers, [as if any of you were, it muſt be the Baptiſt] but in that I know ye are all falſe, blot out that ſaying of our Lord, and write it thus, [wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth unto life and ſalvation, and moſt of the world do finde it:] were it thus, ye might have ſome colour of juſtification that ye were all true, and our Commiſsion onely falſe, then heaven would be full, and hell would be empty. But let me tell you once more, and ſo many as are elected will believe me, that this is the laſt Commiſſion, yea the ſtrait gate, and narrow way, yea the onely way to eternal life, ſo narrow that no hypocrite can enter among us, but

but he is discovered and condemned by us.

And then because it is written, *Beware of false Prophets which come to you in sheeps clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves.* What a noise do ye make in your pulpits, one brother impeaching another for false Prophets, when I know not any of you can without doubt say, which of you are true, and which are false, though it is said, *By their fruits ye shall know them.* Can you tell me the fruits of a true Prophet from a false one? Sure I am ye cannot; therefore I shall tell you, how ye shall know a true from a false, [mind what you read] the fruits of a false Prophet, is to go before he be sent, yea sent by voice of words from Christ the true Ordainer of Prophets, so that ye go forth by the voice and ordination of men, so preach the doctrine of men, and that onely for your honor and preferment, this is a false Prophet, and the fruits of your prophecy, is to be chosen by your members, to fight with the sword of steel, to inrich your selves in the ruine of your disciples, to Lord it over your hearers, to teach a false God, and a false devil, to cheat and murther one another, as now ye do at this day, this all of you are guilty of, in one kind or another, and yet ye that are the onely false Prophets, say to your deluded members, these are dangerous times, take heed of false prophets; which if ye could discern truth, ye should bid them beware of you, that they pin not their salvation upon your doctrine; for the fruits thereof are as aforesaid, onely Reasons philosophy and vain deceit: as if you did but observe what you read, when you say, *not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; but God hath chosen the foolish things to confound the wise, and weak things of the world to confound the mighty, and base things of the world, and things which are despised, God hath chosen; yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are.* Do you believe this? what do ye say to this? are ye fools, are ye ignorant, are ye weak, are ye base, are ye despised? then you might have some plea that you are the true Churches of Christ; but you are too wise, too strong, too many, too honorable to be true Bishops and Messengers of Christ the Lord of Gory, and yet you will not believe

lieve this, but perſwade your ſelves that the richeſt, the proudeſt, and the wiſeſt are the onely true Believers, when I infallibly know from that Spirit of divine Faith, that ye are all the ſons and daughters of *Cain*, that proud *Lucifer* your father, which ere long ſhall have your wages with him in flames of eternal burning, and that for ever.

6. Again, you are falſe, and run in vain, not diſcerning the two ſeeds how they became two where they remain, with the effects and operations ſince the beginning to this day; but having in the fifth chapter of my *Wonder of Wonders* ſpoken ſomething of this ſecret, I ſhall forbear, and in a higher nature make manifeſt what hath been their effects and operations, from that to this day. As unto this, all that do not willfully ſhut their eyes, may read as they run, that according to the ſaying of God, hath ever ſince *been at enmity*, and that not onely in its own ſoul, but one man with another, otherways what need had there been of a Law given to Reaſon the *devil*, but that Reaſon oppreſſeth and injureth another, and ſo makes work for the *Lawyer*, yea ever ſince hath devoured and murthered one another, that Reaſon hath erected *Magiſtrates*, *Judges* and *Lawyers* to reconcile Reaſon divided againſt it ſelf, or elſe condemn it to be executed by the *Hangman*. That you may in brief ſee the fruits, and influence of Faith and Reaſon, I ſhall demonſtrate what their operations are, both in ſpirituals and temporals.

Firſt, As unto ſpirituals, both Faith and Reaſon do motion forth to their original, from whence they had their being, and therefore Faith in the Commiſſion of this laſt age, can tell what it was before it became mortal, and what it is now being mortal, and what it ſhall be when immortalized again, when as Reaſon motion out to the ſame, but having by its diſobedience loſt its purity, and now in mortality it ſoars, if poſſible, to know what it was, what it is now, and what it ſhall be hereafter, but cannot attain it, in that the Covenant or promiſe was not made to Reaſon but Faith onely. As do but enquire whether *Abraham* was the father of Faith or Reaſon, and then you ſhall read *he was the father of the faithful*; and upon that account

account the Covenant was made, with *Abraham*, as it is written, *I will establish my Covenant between thee and me, and thy seed after thee*, &c. So that *Paul* a man of his seed saith, *Now to Abraham, and his seed were the promises made*, &c. So that in all the genealogy of Faith, it hath in one measure or another, been capable of its descent, though never so clear, as now in this last witness of the spirit, for I can with confidence say, that my Faith hath motioned through the grave, yea pierced the heavens, and beheld the glorious person of our Lord Jesus, (and in that view) hath been filled full of divine revelation, that now at its pleasure can ascend and descend in full perswasion, that what by Faith I have seen in glory above, I have in part made known to you below; for my Faith hath evidenced in my soul, that what I have written as touching *God*, *Devil*, *Heaven*, *Hell*, with the death and resurrection of the soul, is the truth and no other, without the knowledge of which no soul can have perfect peace here, or glory hereafter; for the operations of Reason and Faith are much different, in that Reason desires things impossible: for what Faith can and will do, Reason never desires it, but is continually tempting our Lord to impossibities, as to imagine God created the world of nothing, and God a Spirit without body, and created the angels bodiless spirits, and that God never created man to damn him. Now Faith knows that earth and water was eternal, and God hath a spiritual body, and the angels likewise, and that he created the angels Reason to be damned, so that what is possible to Faith, is impossible to Reason, and what Reason imagines is possible, Faith knows is possible: nor but Faith can do what it pleaseth, yet will not be moved at Reasons pleasure, but what ever Faith demands, is possible for God to do, in that Faith desires nothing but what is his royal pleasure, being moved in the operation of its own seed, without doubt believing what ever Faith asketh, it shall receive, not that Faith is boundless, but limited to its original, and so the effects thereof is moved to demand possibilities surable to the tenor of its Commission, given by that divine voice of all powerful Faith, which now is all spiritual, not moved to any external miracles,

miracles, as the two former were, and therefore generated Faith in all Commiſsions did never requeſt Chriſt its Father, but what grew in its ſeed poſsible, knowing that his prerogative would no more move his divine will thereunto; now Reaſon not knowing the mind of our God, it cries and deſires that God would ſend fire from heaven, and blaſt the proceeding of its enemies, ſuppoſing the will of God is the ſame now, as it was then, and that it is as poſsible for God to turn the intentions of their adverſaries upon their own head as formerly. I acknowledge our God can do what his divine ſoul pleaſeth, yet what he hath decreed to the contrary is unpoſsible, and ſure I am as unto your requeſt, *his hand is ſhortned*, and *his ear heavy, that he will not hear you*; for your hands are full of blood, your lips have ſpoken lies, nor have you done juſtice or equity when the power was in your hands; ſo that in the higheſt pitch of revelation I tell you, that it is a work of as great a wonder for our God to take notice of none of you, as when he did obſerve all the tranſactions of his Commiſsioners before you, and ſure I am as unto externals he doth not hear us his laſt Commiſsioners, then how do ye think ye being ſinners, our God ſhould hear you? So that I infallibly ſay, our Lord will not perſerve you, nor deſtroy you, but Reaſon ſubtilty muſt deliver you, as it hath delivered your enemies into your hands before you. If ye will not believe me, then believe the fruits of your own prayers, and much good may they do you. Anſwer to this, Reaſon flies unto Scripture, where it is written, *I am the Lord, I change not: and Chriſt is the ſame yeſterday, to day, and for ever*, not in the leaſt underſtanding the drift of thoſe ſayings, nor believing our God in every Commiſsion hath new tearms of mercies and Judgements, ſuitable to the nature of the Commiſsion; for this know, thoſe ſayings lay in point of his eternal prerogative as unto damnation, and ſalvation, he is the ſame and changeth not: but in externals, *it repented the Lord he made man; and repented that he had made* Saul *King*; but he never repented that he ſaved Faith and damned Reaſon, though Reaſon moderate can ſoar high with exellent heaven-like words, if poſsible, with tears to move the Lord to anſwer

anſwer his deſires, yet all that Reaſon can do, can not change our Lords prerogative, to take off that eternal curſe that was given to Reaſon in the womb of *Eve*, it being impoſsible for God to do Faith never requeſts it, though what lies in the account of Faith nothing is impoſsible; as *Luke* 1. 13. that ſaying was ſpoke upon as great a work of Faith as ever was, though to Reaſon it is impoſsible that the power of the higheſt, which was the Father, could as ſwift as thought deſcend into the womb of *Mary*, and there diſſolve into ſeed, and conceive himſelf into a mortal childe of fleſh, blood, and bone, ſo called *Emanuel* or Jeſus the Son of God, now what the roval will of all Faith had decreed and promiſed to do, that Reaſon cannot believe, but what Faith hath decreed, he will not, ſo cannot do that Reaſon would have him to do, as to make of ſtones bread, or come down from the Croſs and ſave himſelf, which Chriſt could not do, becauſe for that end he came to die that thereby he might not onely raiſe himſelf to glory, but all his ſeed that Reaſon murthered, to glory with him, and keep Reaſon under eternal miſery; and yet how highly is Reaſon reputed by you, and Faith ſlighted with you; and that becauſe Faith revealeth that which Reaſon cannot comprehend, when as Reaſon can declare nothing as touching eternity, but Faith can fathom it, and binde Reaſon hand and foot in the interpretation of it; and therefore in Scripture it is written the high tranſcendent vertues of Faith, but no applauſe of Reaſon at all as concerning the kingdom of God: But

Secondly, As it is the Lord and Governor of this world, ſo the elder brother, its products in the affairs thereof are ſo wiſe, gallant, maieſtical, and glorious, that if Faith knew it not, it would delude the ſeed of eternity; for its wiſdom is ſo great, that it dives into all the ſecrets of nature, which way to make it ſelf happy in this its kingdom; and therefore out of Reaſons ſeed hath ſprung or riſen the knowledge of all Arts and Sciences, men graving, carving, and framing, all gold, ſilver, braſs, ſteel, iron, pewter, lead, glaſs, woollen, linnen, leather, and what not, into variety of forms and faſhions, for its eye

to behold, its back to clothe, and belly to feed, so that in brief there is nothing that the wisdom or hand of man hath invented, but it came from Reasons subtilty, without the assistance of Faith at all; for Faith is so ignorant and simple in the Arts and Sciences of this world, that without Reasons direction it could not make use of what Reason brings to his hand, so when Reason is moderated and well qualified, Faith hath a helpful Handmaid of Reason, but when Reason is immoderate and hypocritical, as seldom it is otherways, O what a monster it is to Faith, that it tramples innocency under foot! yea, brands it guilty of that which onely belongs to it self, and that becauſe Faith cannot dissemble as Reason doth; nay, immoderate Reason is so proud and majestical, that it will not suffer its moderate brother to live by it, but sue it, imprison it, and beggar it. O what a changeable, desiring, unsatisfied seed is Reason, that it is never better but when it is plotting mischief, by back-biting, envying, and if possible, to murther what it hates! So that where Faith is supream, it reigns as a Kingly Prerogative over Reason, otherways Reason would not submit; for both Seeds cannot reign, but there must be divisions till one of them be silent, not but that the conquered will scout forth upon the borders of the Law, but being captivated it cannot act, it may talk and prate what it would do, but Faith being lord, it must have license from Faith before it can conceive its thought to action; so that where Reason is lord, its operations are never satisfied, no not a year, a moneth, or a day, but inventing new fashions, new delights, new mischiefs, sometimes it will be ruled over, and sometimes it will rule it self, as these late transactions will confirm what is written, so that well may the imagination thereof be compared to a bottomless pit, for indeed it knows not what it would be, nor what it would have, never long contented, but either too full or too empty, too rich or too poor, too wise or too foolish, too high or too low; but however the true nature of Reasons motion is to be rich and great in this its heaven, for I know this world was given to Reason, with all the riches and glory there-

thereunto belonging, and therefore let not the devil think that this world will hold as long as it hath done, nor that it shall enjoy its pleasure and lordly reign here, and in our kingdom on the other side of death too; for I know this is your inheritance by birth-right, and not the Saints at all, and therefore we the last Commissioners, or the Believers thereof, shall not plot or conspire against no Power then reigning, but submit to you however you deal with us; for it is none but your seed that disturbs your peace; therefore Faith will be quiet under thy reign, and pay according to our ability what is your demand, onely in spirituals it will not spare to reveal truth in obedience to eternity: and therefore we desire nothing of you but what *Moses* the first Commissioner requested of *Sihon* king of the *Amorites* in naturals, so we would have the same in spirituals; which was, that he might but onely pass thorough their land, not turning into their fields or vineyards, neither would they drink their water, or eat their bread, but what they paid for; yet the children of *Esau*, the seed of Reason, would not let the Seed of Faith pass by, for which they in their own kingdom were destroyed. So as I am the true and beloved Bishop of the Lord, we request but onely to pass quietly thorow your kingdom, as we have not, so we will not turn to the right, or to the left, to molest you, but be silent under your Government: but if ye will not let us pass, but stay us in prison, and there murther us for pretended blasphemy, as the children of *Esau* would have done to *Moses* and his people for rebellion, then take notice, as sure as the *Amorites* were eternally destroyed, so shall ye be eternally damned; for to our kingdom we must go, and without death we cannot go: but if ye be made instrumental to hasten our journey, thereby you hasten your misery, and remember in the height of revelation I told ye so.

Seventhly and lastly, ye run in vain, not knowing what the soul is, and so are ignorant what dies' and therefore by authority in my revelation I shall with all brevity that may be, make it appear, that immortallity cannot inhabit in mortality, but one

muſt be ſwallowed up of the other; However ye cannot underſtand this, yet from an infallible ſpirit I know, that the ſpirit, ſoul, and body, is all one, though three titles, yet but one eſſence, the ſpirit mortal, the ſoul mortal, and the body mortal, yet not three mortals, but one mortal; none divine, but all humane; for they are ſo interwoven in the blood, through the whole body, as it is written, *the life of the fleſh is in the blood*, ſo not two but one; that if you hang one, you muſt hang both. As now you that ſuppoſeth the ſoul cannot die, and were ſpectators of thoſe that were hanged, drawn, and Quatered, deal plainly and tell me, when you ſaw their bodies by a halter ſtifled, and by the Executioner opened, what did you ſee? Was there any thing whipt out when the hang man came? Certain I am, if the ſoul were immortal and could not be killed, you would have ſeen it fly ſome whither: And this know, if the ſoul could not die, it would not ſuffer its body to die, but take it along with it, in that the ſoul cannot live without the body, no more than the body can live without the ſoul. O blinde Reaſon! that you ſhould imagine you ſaw any thing but their ſouls murthered and burned in the fire; for if the ſoul be in the blood, (then minde) in letting out the blood, you pour out the ſoul, as when by the ſpear there came out water and blood, then was the ſoul of our Lord poured forth, as it is written, *he hath poured out his ſoul unto death*. Now without a Scripture you will not believe that the ſoul is in the blood, and in ſpilling the blood you ſpill the ſoul, then read *Jer.* 2. 34. and there you ſhall finde, *In thy skirts is found the blood of the ſouls of the poor innocents*; ſo that without you kill the ſoul, you cannot kill the body, for as long as the ſoul is alive, the body is not dead; but when the ſoul, that is the life, is killed, then the body is killed likewiſe. But then how ſhall we do with that ſaying *Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the ſoul*, &c. the true meaning is, why the body is ſaid to be killed and not the ſoul, in that the ſoul ſhall riſe again, and not the body: the ſoul by death is but changed to a new life, when as the body is killed to an everlaſting death; ſo that in relation to

to eternity, the body is ſaid to be killed, and not the ſoul, in that the ſoul ſhall quickly riſe to life again, and bring with it a body ſuitable to its nature, as it is written, *and to every ſeed its own body*; concerning this you may finde more at large in the ninth chapter of my *Dialogue*.

But then you will query, *If the ſoul and body be one, ſo but one life, and that life in the blood, then it is the ſoul is afflicted with pain, ſorrow, and grief, nay it is the ſoul that is faint, weary, hungry, and ſuffers cold.*

Anſw. Were ye not of the contrary ſeed, I ſhould not need to trouble my pen any further, but anſwer you in plain tearms, that it is the ſoul that eats and drinks, and that is capable of any pain, ſorrow, or joy; nay I infallibly ſay, that when you get a childe you get a ſoul, as it is written, *And all the ſoules they had gotten, ſhe bare unto* Jacob, *ſixteen ſouls, and all the ſouls went with* Jacob *into Egypt. And what ſoul ſoever eateth any maner of blood: And ſhe was in bitterneſs of ſoul: his ſoul within him ſhall mourn: and my ſoul is heavy unto death.* Now theſe ſouls that were got, and upon their feet did go, and eat, and drink, *&c.* were they not men and women? judge ye; So that now let any ſober man judge, whether that any thing but life is capable of death. O how ſenceleſs it is to think that death muſt die, and that mortal life can get to immortal life without death! for death is the way to a new life. O then remember when you ſee a man dead, you ſee a ſoul dead, and that not verbally, but really; for as darkneſs is as real as the light, ſo death is as real a being as life, though death is not to be underſtood but by life, and ſo to be owned by every true Believer.

FINIS.

An EPISTLE left upon Record for the Believers of this Commiſsion in *London.*

BRethren, you are not ignorant that I was as one born without a *Mother*, and like a prodigal run from his *Father*, yet when I was in the height of my rebellion, my *Father* remembred me, and ſpread the skirts of his love over me, yea as a brand out of the fire delivered me, and in due time, by his great beloved and laſt Commiſſioner, was ordained, and in the Authority of his Commiſſion, often related what a glorious inſtrument I ſhould be, to illuſtrate and beautifie his Commiſſion, the like never ſhould come after me, with many infallible expreſſions uttered to our beloved *Frances* concerning me, all which was done when I was in my infancy, yet according to his revelation have proved true, as is now upon record in publick by me: O what love was beſtowed upon me, that I, yea I, that was the greateſt of ſinners, ſhould have the firſt and laſt fruits of his ordination, who had the voice of God, yea was ſpoken unto mouth to mouth by God, which none now living never had, nor never ſhall have like unto *John Reeve*, but onely viſions, dreames, and dark ſpeeches, which is nothing in compariſon of him, yet by this the greateſt Prophet that ever ſhall be, was I made worthy to be a fellow laborer in the work of the Lord with him, who hath not been ſlothful, but improved my talent beyond all now living, or that ſhall come after me, in diſcerning of hypocrites

pocrites from ſound hearts, and finding out the loſt ſheep of this laſt age, yet in all this I glory not, but rejoyce that in my knowledge I am not puffed up, but humble as a ſervant in obedience to it, for which I ſlighted a good name, with the proſperity of this world, and do ſtand with my life in my hand, againſt all ſpiritual Principalities and Powers of the devil: am I not ready to offer the death of my ſoul, to what Reaſon ſhall demand, that by my revelation you may hold out to the end, and raign in glory with me, though ſuffer nothing like unto me. O then can you look abroad, and not ſee at home? can you be true, if I be falſe? can you be happy, and I periſh? Is Chriſt divided, that you are at emnity? Then in vain is your Faith, have I not labored to beget ye Sons in the truth, though not all of you here, yet moſt of you elſewhere have been the travel of my ſoul, to leave a Legacy behind me, for the comfort of believers after me, which then will be prized, though not as it ought by you regarded. If I complain, it is becauſe of you, that uſeth the freedom of a Commiſſion in the abuſe of it, I therefore intreat you, if ye believe it, and truly know it, be wiſe, yet innocent in this your profeſſion, and walk worthy of it, for I am preſſed in my ſpirit as a refiner to try you, and ſift you as corn is ſifted in a ſieve, and who ſhall deliver you, or feed you with fancies that ſhall periſh with you? O brethren, let me leave this in charge with you, and forget not what I ſay in mortallity, leſt ye be forgotten in immortallity, that you accuſe not another of that you are guilty of your ſelves, but firſt examine at home, and then you may the better diſcern abroad, for from the higheſt to the loweſt, while

in mortality there will be infirmities; O then be ſilent, and cover each others nakedneſs, and in love ſtrengthen one another, (you are but few) and have many enemies, therefore be friendly among your ſelves, be kind, comfort, and that not grudgingly, but willingly refreſh one another, and grieve not the heart of him that hath rejoyced yours, whoſe ſoul doth mourn in love to this Commiſſion. Are ye ſaints? Then baniſh ſpiritual pride, partiality, and vain-glory. Are ye believers, then revile not when reviled, ſee and not ſee, hear and not hear, do not ſay and unſay, fend and prove, backbite, and ſowe diſſentions, for Faith that worketh by love, cannot equivocate nor diſſemble, but doth bear and forbear; Faith that worketh by love doth abaſe it ſelf, and exalt another; yea ſuffereth all things. O thou *Kent* and *Cambridgſhire* there is much beauty in thee, and mercy flows from thee, as alſo ſome in *London* is not behind thee, for where truth is grounded in love, it doth walk ſuitable to a God of love, and who is contrary minded from ſuch turn away: now the royal ſeed-ſpring within you preſerve you that ye may live in love and unity, as our Lord hath practiſed before you, then you will not fall out by the way, but like *Abraham*, take the left or right to preſerve peace here, and glory hereafter.

Farewel.

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